# UNIVERSALISM AND THE UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

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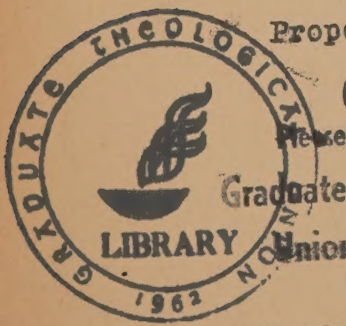
# UNIVERSALISM
## AND THE
# UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

BY

JOHN COLEMAN ADAMS, D. D.

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## CONTENTS


I. The History of the Faith ..... 5
II. The Pioneers of the Faith ..... 14
III. Controversy and Construction ..... 25
IV. The Theology of the Faith ..... 32
V. The Ethics of the Faith ..... 41
VI. The Faith as a Social Leaven ..... 48
VII. The Faith and Worship ..... 58
VIII. The Faith at Work ..... 65
IX. Literature and the Faith ..... 76
X. The Bible and the Faith ..... 83
XI. The Spread of the Faith ..... 91
XII. The Kingdom of God ..... 99
XIII. Statements of the Faith ..... 108

# INTRODUCTION

This little book had its origin in a desire, expressed by a vote of the Connecticut Universalist Convention, for a brief statement, both of the history and the teachings and principles of the Universalist Church. The attempt has been to make a book which shall serve as an ntroduction to the Larger Faith for inquirers and a manual for adult classes in the study of Universalism, and which shall also indicate a larger range of reading to such as may wish to cover it. It is hoped that many may find it a guide to what the author devoutly believes will be the Faith of the Future.

*John Coleman Adams.*

*Hartford*, 1915.

# UNIVERSALISM
## AND THE
# UNIVERSALIST CHURCH

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## I. THE HISTORY OF THE FAITH

### THE SOURCES OF THE FAITH

Universalism is the faith that good will finally triumph over evil, and that all living souls will at last be brought into harmony with the will of God. It is a belief which has its roots in the deepest yearnings and the highest hopes of the human heart. It has been cherished by many souls, in many times and lands. As held in our own day, it is derived from the intimations and the spirit of the Hebrew Scriptures, especially the great visions and the invincible hopes of the prophets; from the deep faith of the apostles in the power of a loving God, and the work of His son Jesus Christ; and from the teachings of Jesus as to the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of man, the unconquerable power of love, the teachableness of the human soul. It is a doctrine, therefore, which claims to be at once reasonable and scriptural, agreeing with the truest philosophy and the divinest revelation. The faith that God is our Father

carries with it the belief that He is bound by His very nature to save all His children. The faith in His omnipotence implies His power to do what He wills. His manifested purpose in the mission of Jesus Christ, to "save His people from their sins," culminating in the death of the Saviour on the cross, is the most potent means ever set in motion for the reconciliation of men to God. The Universalist faith assumes that the story of God's dealings with men as recorded in the Old and New Testaments is a true interpretation of the will and the way of Divine Providence. From the departure of Adam out of Eden, on his way through toil and pain to self-conquest, up to the vision of the New Jerusalem, the perfect city of God, the Scriptures depict and imply the renewal of opportunity, the progress of man, the increasing light and life of God in the soul, the unfolding of a great and all-inclusive plan for the revelation of the real nature of God in the person of Jesus Christ, and the deliverance of the creation from the bondage of sin and moral evil, "into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

Thus the sources of modern Universalism are to be traced back to the teachings of the Bible and to the intimations of reason. It is a faith which commends itself to the understanding and to the best affections of man.

It fits the thought of to-day, in all its outreach to a broader brotherhood, to a more spiritual faith, and to a more sincere and consistent righteousness.

## THE FAITH IN THE EARLY CHURCH

It is commonly supposed that Universalism is a modern doctrine, invented in a lax and faithless time, and never regarded with any toleration by the orthodox of any Christian age. This is far from the truth. In the early centuries some of the greatest leaders of the church were avowed believers in the final holiness and happiness of all men, and the faith was at least on an equality with other doctrines concerning the destiny of souls. The whole tone of the teaching which followed the apostolic days was cheerful, trustful, and loving toward God and man. The pictured walls of the Catacombs and the memorial inscriptions on their tablets show that the ideas of judgment, penalty and hell were not in the minds of Christians, but the thought of God's love, of the mercy and goodness of Christ, and of the brotherhood which united the membership of the infant church.

The Sibylline Oracles, which was the first Christian literary work after the apostolic times, was avowedly of the Larger Faith. So were three of the great Gnostic sects, flourishing in the second century. With the

rise of Alexandria as a center of Christianity and the leadership of Greek thought in the theology of the church, Universalism became the faith of the great leaders, and by natural sequence, of their popular following. In the theological school at Alexandria, the first great Christian school, as well as at four others later established, Universalism was explicitly taught. The head of this school was Clement, one of the greatest scholars of the church, who was not only a Universalist himself, but taught the doctrine as the word of the apostles. Origen, his pupil, and the foremost Christian of his time, made the doctrine of universal salvation a fundamental truth in his theological work, *De Principiis*, the first Christian theological system every presented. In other parts of the church, as at Antioch, at Edessa, and at Caesarea, the same doctrine was taught. So that all over the church of the third and fourth centuries, Universalism was good orthodoxy.

The most eminent names of the third and fourth centuries are those of avowed Universalists, perhaps the foremost being Gregory and Theodore, who affirmed the faith in the most emphatic manner. In an age of the church in which it was growing in spirit and in power, rich in scholarly and godly men, mighty in missionary enterprise, this faith was held by the majority of Christians, and taught

by the most influential leaders. From these facts there is no appeal. They show that the truth of the final harmony of all souls with God was the primitive doctrine of the Christian Church.

## THE ECLIPSE OF THE FAITH

The faith in the final salvation of all souls was the belief of the majority of the members of the early church, and for more than three centuries was unchallenged as a tenet of orthodoxy. The first four General Councils of the church did not lay down any doctrine whatever concerning the fate of the wicked. Frederic W. Farrar asserts that neither at Nicaea, nor at Constantinople, nor at Ephesus, nor at Chalcedon, when and where the great creeds of Christendom were fashioned, was any special doctrine laid down respecting future rewards and punishments, nor were the well known views of Origen condemned or alluded to.

But with the lapse of time the great Greek leaders, who had impressed their thought upon the mind of the church, passed from the stage, and with them much of the breadth and sanity of theology. A century and a half after the death of Origen, his memory and his doctrines were attacked, and condemnation secured against them, by local councils. The influence of western theological

ideals increased and, with the rise and dominance of the mind of Augustine, fixed the standards of orthodoxy for more than a thousand years. The fall of man, original sin, total depravity, vicarious atonement, the blood redemption, the everlasting punishment of the wicked—these were the details of "the scheme of redemption" which were taken up and further developed by John Calvin, and have been so long maintained by the church, both Roman and Reformed, that "his opinions have become identified with divine revelation, and are all that the majority of the Christian world yet know of the religion of Jesus Christ." (*Allen.*)

But there were other than theological reasons for the decline of the Larger Faith in the church of the Dark and Middle Ages. In the social and the political conditions of the times there was little to encourage, much to repress the doctrines of the Fathers. The social chaos brought on by the fall of Rome; the incursions of the barbarians, bringing with them ideas the most remote from the gospel of Christ; the spread of ignorance and of superstition; the lowering of ethical standards—all these conditions of a dreary and darkened age of the world were wholly unfavorable to the spread or even the survival of the doctrine of universal salvation. This teaching is a doctrine of the light. It is not

singular that it should wane during the years known as the "Dark Ages." The world was no more ripe for it than it was for the other finer and more spiritual truths of the Gospel.

## THE EMERGENCE OF THE FAITH

The overshadowing of the primitive faith continued for a matter of seven or eight centuries. Then there began a series of movements, affecting the whole European world, which prepared the way for the revival of the ancient beliefs and the dawn of a new era in the realm of religious life. The first was the revival of learning in Europe, when men began to open their eyes and see, to open their minds and to think. The second was the Protestant Reformation and a new sense of the value and the rights of the individual soul. The right of private judgment, and the opportunity of free inquiry ensuing upon this great schism in the church, opened the way for new conceptions of God and His relations to His children. The third movement was the rise of democracy and the spread of popular liberty, which broadened the thinking and the sympathies of mankind, and prepared them for a better conception of the purposes of God. The fourth was the multiplication of sects, under Protestant influences, which made it possible for a new thought or spirit in

the Church of Christ to assert itself and to impress its message on the world. The fifth was the opening of this continent, and the opportunity it afforded for the rise of new movements in line with the great political ideals which were moulding the policies of the New World. All these social, moral and religious forces were behind what we may call the Broad Church movement in America and in Europe, which was to mould and to reform the religious thinking of a century. A new atmosphere was created, which was as unfavorable to the harsh doctrines of the Latin Church—to the ideas of Augustine and of Calvin—as the changing climate of the earth was to the glaciers which once covered the land which now forms our home.

The term which was used to designate the combined influence in America which thus gathered to itself the thought and the life of centuries, was "Arminianism." That was the technical name for democracy in religion. It stood for the same things as are today called "Liberalism." It was the assertion of the moral capacity of man. It presented a milder interpretation of the character of God. It demanded the right of free inquiry in religious truth. It was tolerant, humane, rational. In its rise and spread there broke upon the darkness and horror of Calvinism the light of a new theological day, whose

brightness has ever since been growing in this and in every land.

*References:* Thayer's "Theology of Universalism." Allin's "Universalism Asserted." Farrar's "Eternal Hope" and "Mercy and Judgment." Adams's "Universal Holiness and Happiness," in "The Columbian Universalist Congress." Ballou's "Ancient History of Universalism." Beecher's "History of the Doctrine of Future Retribution." Allen's "Continuity of Christian Thought." Hanson's "Universalism in the First Five Hundred Years of the Christian Church." "Unitarianism in America," G. W. Cooke. "Universalism in America," Vol. II., Richard Eddy. "Religious Thought in Britain During the Ninteenth Century," John Tulloch. "A Short History of the Christian Church," John W. Moncrief. "Old and New Unitarian Belief," John W. Chadwick.

## II. THE PIONEERS OF THE FAITH

### EARLY PREACHERS IN AMERICA

It is a well-established fact that the revival of Universalism in America was fostered by five different groups of believers, aside from the apostolate of John Murray, who is commonly called the founder of the faith in this country. It was the common belief of a number of scattered men who may be grouped and named as Mystics. Among these were Samuel Gorton of Massachusetts, Sir Henry Vane, a governor of the colony, and, most pronounced and aggressive of all, Dr. George de Benneville, a French Protestant, who settled in Germantown, near Philadelphia, and became a pronounced advocate of this truth. It was he and his friends, the German immigrants who settled the town, who circulated a volume which they themselves printed, called "The Everlasting Gospel," written by one Paul Siegvolck, and teaching unmistakably the Larger Faith.

The second group was the little sect of German Baptists, called Dunkers, who have always held, though at times as a private doctrine, the final restoration of all things in Christ. Through them the faith was preached here and there in the South, and by the use of their printing press at Germantown

and otherwise they gave aid and comfort to de Benneville and to other Universalists.

A third means of introducing the doctrine into this country was through the Moravians of Pennsylvania, many of whom were pronounced Universalists. One of these was Peter Bohler, pastor at Bethlehem, and afterward made Bishop of America.

In the Episcopalian Church of the eighteenth century there was much open Universalism, and more that was privately held. Robert Yancy of Virginia took very strong and open ground on this subject. So did Jacob Duche, the clergyman who first offered prayer in the Continental Congress. So also Dr. William Smith, principal and founder of the University of Pennsylvania, a churchman of the highest standing and influence, who, as a reviser of the prayer-book, very nearly committed the Episcopal Church to the doctrine of universal salvation. He was a frequent attendant upon the preaching of John Murray.

Among the Congregationalists of New England there was a very decided tendency to the Larger Faith. Jonathan Mayhew, pastor of the West Church in Boston from 1747 to 1766, held unmistakably to the final salvation of all men. Charles Chauncy, the distinguished pastor of the First Church, wrote and spoke voluminously in defense of the

divine unity and the salvation of the whole human race. So did Jeremy Belknap, many years settled over the Federal Street Church. Rev. Joseph Huntington, D. D., of Coventry, Conn., wrote a vigorous defense of Universalism, entitled, "Calvinism Improved." Indeed, so common and so dangerous was this heresy, that it roused much protest, and created no inconsiderable literature in contradiction and refutation. Here and there throughout the entire churches of America, by the lips of many witnesses, a testimony was borne to the larger thought of God and man. It was scattered and unorganized, a force which had not begun to concentrate. But it was a portent of what was coming, in the century's struggle for a better theology, a brighter outlook for man, a nobler motive for effort and for sacrifice.

## JOHN MURRAY THE EVANGELIST

Two things had now become needful for the spread of the larger faith in America. One was a definite, organized body. The other was a definite, formulated creed. The movement for emancipated thought awaited a church and a theology. The first was the result of the labors and the faith of John Murray, the founder of the Universalist Church in America. He was an English Methodist, who by domestic trouble and

religious unrest was led to come to America. His meeting with Thomas Potter, the man who had built a little meeting-house in the New Jersey woods and was waiting for a man to preach in it, is one of the romances of church history. How "this fisherman-farmer, this heroic man of faith, arrested the flight of this fugitive, insisting that he deliver the message entrusted to him, and what came of it," is one of the wonder stories of the faith. Murray became a new and efficient man, an ardent missionary preacher of the redemption of all souls in Jesus Christ, a bold evangelist, a self-sacrificing founder of groups of believers. He traversed the colonies from New Hampshire to Maryland, preaching where he could gain a hearing, even beside the camp-fires of the Revolution. He finally settled in Gloucester, Mass., where he organized the first Universalist church in America. Thence, in 1793, he removed to Boston, where he preached until the time of his death.

John Murray was a Calvinist, who believed very strongly in the decrees of God, and who took all his theological teaching from James Relly, whose curious book entitled "Union" teaches that all men have been brought into the favor of God, by the righteousness of Jesus Christ, as truly as if each had suffered and obeyed in his own person. The thinking of James Relly, plus the faith of

Thomas Potter, fashioned the life of John Murray into that of an evangelist and a prophet of the new word of the Lord. He made the rude beginnings of an organized church, and when the "First Independent Christian Church of Gloucester" was founded there began the gathering of scattered forces which were to constitute the vanguard of the host which was destined to rout the harsh dogmas of a benighted era, and bring in the light of a new theological day. The Universalists were the first in the field with an organization to support the "New Thought" of the eighteenth century. For a whole generation before the Unitarians of the country were organized, the Universalists were enlisted, mustered in and drilled for the conflict.

## HOSEA BALLOU THE THEOLOGIAN

While John Murray was breaking up the theological soil of America with the ploughshare of a modified Calvinism, and while here and there a prophetic hand was sowing the seed of the Larger Faith, there was maturing in the hills of New Hampshire a man who, first of all the liberals of the land, thought things through, and wrought the great ideas which possessed the minds of many into something like a coherent theology. Hosea Ballou was born in Richmond, N. H., in 1771. His origin was lowly, his early life

one of poverty, toil and scant resources, both material and intellectual. With the Bible for his theological text-book, and his own clear, prayerful thinking as interpreter, he freed himself from the sophistries and the terrors of the orthodoxy of his day, and found the light of the higher truth, for himself and for all men. In 1805 he gave to the world, in his "Treatise on Atonement," the first American book which embodied the outlines of the Broad Church theology, restating the great New Testament teachings, and relating them to the foundation truth that "God is love."

The "Treatise" taught, as the New Theology teaches to-day, the unchanging love of God to man; His eternal Fatherhood; man's sonship to God; the mission of Jesus as the reconciler of man to God; the certainty of punishment for sin; and the final salvation of all souls. It formulated, more than a century before it became the common ground of American Christianity, the truth that love and not wrath is the center of the Gospel message. There is not a single point of that later thought which we call the "New Theology," save in its view of the origin of the Scriptures, which Ballou does not anticipate in the "Treatise." He was the theological forerunner of Bushnell, Beecher, and Brooks, preparing the theological atmosphere in which their milder orthodoxy might flourish and

bear fruit. He was first in point of time. He was foremost in the scope of his doctrine and thought.

Ballou's theology made a strong appeal to the intellects of the time stirred to rebellion against the old faith, and not satisfied with Murray's Calvinism with a new conclusion. When the Universalist Church assumed a form of organized life in 1803, the theology of Hosea Ballou was its informing spirit.

## ELHANAN WINCHESTER THE SCHOLAR

One more name should be mentioned beside that of Murray and Ballou, among the early witnesses to the truth in America. It is that of Elhanan Winchester, born in Brookline, Mass., and trained in the Baptist Church. His tender and brotherly soul was unreconciled to the harsh doctrines in which he was reared, and of whose truthfulness he grew more and more in doubt. Falling in with a copy of Siegvolck's book, "The Everlasting Gospel," he read its doctrines as a thirsty man drinks water. Opposed and attacked by those around him, he soon had his hands full in teaching and defending the new faith of his heart. He and his followers were soon excommunicated from the Baptist communion, and soon after organized a "Society of Universal Baptists," in Philadelphia. He was not in harmony with John

Murray in all points, but they remained on good terms, and highly respected each other. Winchester was what would now be called a Restorationist, or believer in limited punishment if necessary, after death. He was a man of large scholarship for his day, and his mental powers were a marvel to his kindred and followers. His grave is in the old Center Burying Ground in Hartford, marked by a stone with this stanza:

"'Twas thine to preach with animated zeal
The glories of the restitution morn,
When sin, death, hell, the power of Christ shall feel,
And life, light, immortality, be born."

Murray, Winchester and Ballou—these were the foremost leaders of the yeomanry of the churches who revolted from the old faith and turned their backs forever upon Calvinism and all its works.

Their followers were a plain and simple folk, gathered from the democracy of the land, whose revolt against the old creeds was the turning of reason, of humanity, of common-sense, away from the impossible and the incredible, and a search for an interpretation of the gospel of Jesus Christ which does not outrage the moral sense of men, nor conflict with reason, nor contradict the best and holiest affections. They believed in making an issue with the "standing order," and taking all the consequences of denuncia-

tion and of persecution. The consequences were not lacking; but the conflict was on and there was no slackness in the fighting.

## THE UNKNOWN HEROES OF THE FAITH

No account of the founding of the Larger Faith in America would be complete which failed to make mention of the great number of unknown men and women who in the days of opposition and of persecution upheld and encouraged the preaching of the truth. Wherever the heralds of the new doctrine went, they were encouraged and sustained in their work by those who received it with joy and provided for its hearing and helped its spread. They gathered in halls, in school-houses, in court-houses, in private dwellings, in barns, sometimes in the open air, to hear the proclamation of these new tidings of joy. They were attacked and they were slandered; they were threatened with violence and with the law of the land; they were made to suffer social ostracism and business boycott; they were treated as heretics and infidels; friends grew cold and enemies plotted against them. It was no light matter to be a Universalist in those days. One must suffer reproach as a foe of religion and of the social order. But there were souls behind this movement that were of the stuff from which martyrs are made. Plain farmer folk in the little

towns all over the New England states; merchants in the cities; the stout-hearted fisherfolk of Cape Ann and Cape Cod; the pioneers of the Great West that was growing so fast, with the sturdy stock of New England and of New York; all these representatives of the great middle class of the new republic furnished a loyal and aggressive constituency to the missionaries of the word, who gave their efforts, their time, and their money to the cause. To their loyalty, their courage, their patient devotion, we owe it that the seed was sown, that a hearing was secured, that the growth was protected, of the doctrines which were to be the orthodoxy of a new and better theological day. The founders of the faith were not merely the leaders who led and the preachers who proclaimed the word. They were the multitudes of plain people who listened and followed and stood in battle for the new gospel. All honor to the obscure multitude who received the truth and passed it on to us.

*References:* "History of Universalism," Richard Eddy. "Unitarianism in America," George W. Cooke. "Pioneers of Religious Liberty in America." Murray's Works. "John Murray's Landfall" and "The Flower of the Field" (poems), Nehemiah Dodge. "Life of John Murray," begun by himself and completed by Mrs. Murray. "Life of Ballou," O. F. Safford; by Thomas Whittemore; by M. M. Ballou. "Hosea

Ballou and the Gospel Renaissance of the Nineteenth Century," John Coleman Adams. "A Treatise on Atonement," fourteenth edition. "Life of Winchester," Wm. Vidler (London, 1797).

# III. CONTROVERSY AND CONSTRUCTION

## THE ENCOUNTER WITH ORTHODOXY

The situation which presented itself to the apostles and the disciples of the Larger Faith was as difficult and serious as ever tried the souls of the saints. Briefly, they had to meet and to overcome a hard and puritanic spirit in the churches, a harsh system of Calvinistic theology, and a religion and a theology both strongly intrenched in the institutions of the state. They were arrayed against the religion, the theology and the state of their time. The theology of the period was all based on the five "Points" of Calvinism, which affirmed Predestination, Particular Redemption, Total Depravity, Effectual Calling, Final Perseverance—a tough and gloomy scheme of thought as ever masked under the name of the gospel. To these were added, as to a common foundation, the Trinity, the Vicarious Atonement, and Everlasting Hell. The time was one of theological gloom and religious pessimism. God was a stern and vengeful being, whose chief trait was an overdeveloped sense of justice. Jesus was the peacemaker, pleading with an angered monarch. Human nature was the synonym for all depravities. Life was a probationary

trial to select and apportion the populations of heaven and of hell. Salvation was an insurance arrangement, guaranteeing a future heaven. Parents mourned for little babes in hell; men did not dare to mourn at all for their other unregenerate dead.

It was against this terrible scheme that the Universalist pioneers found themselves arrayed in attack. To those who upheld this system, our fathers in the faith were as public enemies and heretics against eternal truth. No opposition was too stern, no battle too sharp to give them. To secure any hearing at all for the new thought demanded all the sacrifices of a people going to war for conviction's sake.

## FELLOWSHIP UNDER PERSECUTION

From the earliest days of the preaching of the Larger Faith in America, its defenders separated into two parties. The one was disposed to avoid controversy and content themselves, as Dr. Freeman of Boston said, "with leading their hearers by a course of rational but prudent sermons, gradually and insensibly to adopt it." The other were aggressive and outspoken from the first, and boldly proclaimed their great faith with a positiveness that attracted instant attention and opposition. This fact accounts for the existence of the Universalist organization

for more than a generation before the Unitarian body was formed. The men who stood first and definitely for the salvation of all souls were the more quickly forced to organize and formulate a fighting faith, to gather their followers and equip them for offense and defense. Their sentence was for open war, and long before their brethren of the more pacific temper had been driven from the old communions, they were an organized host, small indeed, but aggressive and determined in their resistance to the old system and all its works. In 1785 a general meeting was held at Oxford, Mass., at which five parishes and four ministers formed themselves into an association, and drew up a model constitution for individual churches. But for the most part the new "Separatists" kept as much aloof from friends as from foes, and the long mistake was begun of an extreme congregationalism, under whose unsocial spirit every parish does as it chooses without reference to what others are doing or wishing to do. The Universalist cause has always suffered chiefly from the independency which leads every church to go its own way, weakens all efforts for common ends, makes organization a mere mockery, and denies all that concert of action which is the strength of every great modern enterprise. It is easy to defend them, and to say that they but fell into the

ways of the churches all around them, and that as their fight was for freedom of thought as well as for a reformed product of thought, nothing short of such liberty of action was to be expected; the fact remains that the policies of the Universalist Church during all its history have been handicapped and defeated by the individualism of its membership and the independency of its churches.

## THE BEGINNINGS OF ORGANIZATION

The first step the believer takes, when he becomes fully conscious of his own faith, is to associate himself with others of like mind. The local group is naturally first, the believers in the village or town coming together for encouragement, counsel or instruction. Thus little groups of believers in Universalism began to appear in the American colonies as early as the year 1779, when Murray organized the "Independent Church of Gloucester." Very soon after this event societies for the support of this faith were formed in Oxford, Boston, Philadelphia, Richmond, N. H., and other places, until in the year 1800 there were about thirty-five societies scattered along the coast from Maine to Pennsylvania, and probably many more groups of people with whom it was the habit of the early preachers to meet from time to time in their rounds of ministration. It was a

misfortune then, and it has been one ever since, that the founders of the Universalist Church did not perceive the need and the power of organization, system and association. As one of the societies reported at a convention in 1792, "The brethren in this place seem averse to system, and generally walk as seemeth right to every man." To such a people of course the only fitting form of government in the churches is congregationalism, or the independency of each congregation over its own affairs. It is local self-government in ecclesiastical affairs. In 1778, Warwick, Jaffrey, and Richmond, N. H., formed a little association, to meet annually for mutual helpfulness. This was the first instance of such co-operative action.

The first convention of any importance was held at Philadelphia in 1790, and consisted of seven preachers and ten laymen, who adopted a creed, formulated a plan of church government, and gave an impulse toward co-operative effort, much needed in the young denomination, but too weak a one to send it far in the right direction.

## THE FORMATION OF THE CHURCH

The first effort of the young denomination to get together was by means of loosely organized groups of parishes, in neighborhood bodies, called "associations." These

afforded a slight bond of union, and a basis for common rules and modes of procedure. It was a means, moreover, of rallying the people of the various neighborhoods for common meetings, at which preaching and worship helped to spread the faith and also to strengthen the fellowship between the parishes. Some of these associations were large in the territory they covered, if not in the authority they exercised. On the other hand, the number of smaller associations formed multiplied the weak and inefficient bodies, which delayed the day of closer and more effectual organization. But they had a marked vitality, as is proved by the fact that more than fifty are still reported as active.

It was inevitable, however, that these associations should tend to combine and concentrate, and that the natural boundaries followed in the reorganization should be those of the states in which they were located. Hence came gradually the rise of the state conventions, which assumed the governing and administrative powers of the associations and added to them. But it soon appeared that Universalists believed in still more thorough organization, in the interests of effective work, discipline, and co-operation. Hence came a long series of attempts to bring the state conventions together in one ecclesiastical body, with some measure of authority and

some policy which should co-ordinate the scattered efforts of so many and so diverse groups. In the face of no little opposition, born of the intense individualism common to Universalists as "dissenters," this policy at last prevailed, and, in 1866, a majority of the state conventions having consented, the Universalist churches of America became, legally and ecclesiastically, the Universalist General Convention. A constitution and code of laws, of remarkable working ability, was formed and adopted at Gloucester in 1870, which with some changes is still the accepted law of the Universalist Church. Under this instrument, the parishes, or individual churches, in each state are entitled to representation in the state conventions, and these in turn elect delegates, every two years, to a session of the General Convention. This body elects a Board of Trustees, which constitutes the governing body of the church, whose work, however, is supplemented by a General Superintendent.

*References:* "Hosea Ballou," John Coleman Adams. "Unitarianism in America," G. W. Cooke. "History of Universalism," Richard Eddy. "Pioneers of Religious Liberty in America," article on Hosea Ballou, John Coleman Adams. "Short History of Universalism," Fisher. John G. Adams's "Fifty Notable Years," Hosea W. Parker's "Denominational Polity and Organization," in "The Columbian Congress."

## IV. THE THEOLOGY OF THE FAITH

### THE FIRST AFFIRMATIONS

The early heralds of the new teaching were divided into two schools, the one following John Murray in his Rellyan ideas; the other leaning to the views of Elhanan Winchester. Murray held that Jesus died for all men, and that therefore all men are saved. redeemed, and restored, whether conscious of it or not; Winchester held that punishment here and hereafter was needful to bring men to repentance, and so to a proper state to enjoy the bliss of heaven. By the beginning of the new century, the whole denomination had thought its way to the side of Hosea Ballou, who, in place of the insistence on a single dogma, inserted into the Calvinistic creed, presented a symmetrical and logical system, starting from the love of God as a center, and leading up to the salvation of all souls as a conclusion and culmination.

The "Treatise on Atonement" was the first American book to present a full and consistent scheme of doctrine framed in the interests of the Larger Faith. The whole "scheme of salvation" as held by the Orthodox Calvinists of those times, and by the heretical Calvinists who followed John Murray, was rejected—the Atonement, the Trinity, the

Fall of Man, Total Depravity, Salvation by Faith alone, and Endless Punishment. In place of the rejected system Ballou based the whole of his theology upon the Divine Fatherhood and the human brotherhood; affirmed that love is the very heart of the divine nature and purpose; that salvation is the rescue of the soul from sin and not from punishment; that punishment is the natural suffering of a soul deranged by sin; that atonement is the reconciling of man to God; that finally all souls will be brought into harmony with God. Such was the radical, sweeping, reconstructive spirit of Ballou's thought, which completely captured and dominated the new brotherhood.

## THE ATTACK ON THE DOCTRINE OF EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT

In the conduct of the campaign which, after a century's hard fighting, was destined to destroy the popular belief in everlasting punishment in America, it was inevitable that a great many associated dogmas should be attacked. Involved in the great controversy were the doctrines of the fall of man, of original sin, of total depravity, of infant damnation, of vicarious atonement, of the Trinity and of predestination. The points of assault were thus many and tempting. The attack on any one of them involved an attack on all.

The "scheme of salvation" was a closely reasoned, logically built system, whose parts depended one upon the other, like the stones in an arch. But the keystone is the vulnerable place in the arch, and the strategic point, so to speak, of the structure, and the keystone of the scheme of American Orthodoxy was the doctrine of everlasting punishment. This our fathers in the faith saw with the unerring accurracy of trained theological minds, and on this doctrine they made fierce and unremitting attack. They saw that if the force and reality of this dogma could be destroyed, all the others would fall of their own weight, there being thereafter no reason for their existence. If, for instance, there were no eternal hell, why should there be any need of the vicarious atonement? They saw, moreover, that to discredit this hideous doctrine would be to create an atmosphere most favorable to the reconstruction of the whole of the current theology. And it was abundantly clear that the quickest way to arouse the interest of the average man in theology was to take it up at the point where it bore the hardest upon himself and his own personal destiny. The strategy of these men was perfect, and worked as they had foreseen. No theological question was ever debated with more eagerness and heat than that of the final salvation of all men. It was fundamental,

it was pervasive, it was personal. Therefore, quite as much by instinct and by necessity as by deliberate plan, the fathers of Universalism made the attack on this repellent doctrine the first and the constant care of their minds and souls. Not because John Murray began the warfare so, nor because their minds were not large enough to take into account other and vital matters, but because here, they perceived, was the vulnerable point of the popular faith, they struck early and always and incessantly. To destroy the belief in the dreadful and degrading doctrine of everlasting punishment became the aim of the Universalists of the nineteenth century.

## FROM DOGMA TO SYSTEM

In the period between the years 1795 and 1820, a marked evolution was taking place in the thought of the men who were lining up as Universalists. The so-called "orthodox" type of belief, as held by John Murray, was giving way to a new theory of the universe and of its Creator and its administration. The Trinitarian doctrine concerning God was supplanted by the doctrine of the Divine Unity, and the Universalists became the first body of Unitarian Christians in the country. As John W. Chadwick says, Hosea Ballou "published his book on the Atonement in 1805,

at which time Boston Unitarianism was all latent; and it was not till 1815 that Channing, by his letter to Worcester, obliged his Unitarian friends to show their colors and pass for what they were. By this time, thanks to Hosea Ballou, the Universalists were a homogeneous anti-Trinitarian body." The emphasis now was not on destiny alone, but on all that determines destiny. For Universalism began to mean, not only a blessed Goal, but also a glorious Way. The form which the faith assumed in these years has become characteristic of the Liberal or Broad Church thought in America.

It starts from the doctrine of the Fatherhood of God, which is only a concrete form of the doctrine that love is the core and essence of the Divine Nature. It looks to the Lord Jesus Christ as the expression of the Divine Life in a human soul, the image and Son of the invisible God, who is the centre and heart of the Christian religion. It rejects the old, hard, legal view of the atonement, and seeks a more humane and rational interpretation of that work. It rejects the rigid Calvinism of fifty or a hundred years ago with an ardor which approaches fierceness. It calls the Bible a record of revelation, and treats it as a book or a collection of books, to be studied like other books, under the same laws of criticism, the same sense of

literary conditions, the same weighing of times and national traits and personal characteristics which shape the form and method of revelation. It treats the human race as a brotherhood, and human nature as the erring but still divine offspring of God, sinful but not utterly depraved, lost but destined to salvation, with a weakening likeness to Adam and a growing likeness to Christ. It recognizes the unity of nature and the inter-relation of the kingdoms of spirit and matter. It believes that the keynote of God's providence in things spiritual is not evil, retribution, damnation; but good, education, discipline and salvation.

## FORMULATING THE FAITH

It must be set down to the vast credit of Ballou and the men of his period, that they saw that the whole system of popular theology must be recast. They recognized, indeed, that destiny is the supreme concern of man, and that our thought about it colors all our conclusions as to duty and to action. But they also saw that the evil conception of the universe involved in the doctrine of eternal punishment would not be rectified until all the "scheme of salvation" was revised. It was a deadly venom, poisoning all theology. It held up the dogma of God's awful wrath on the one hand, and of man's awful vileness

on the other. It offered a plausible reason for the vicarious atonement, and vitiated the doctrine of divine decrees. It helped sustain the dark dogma of total depravity and the awful affirmation of the damnation of infants. Such a conglomerate of errors concerning God and His universe called for thorough revision. And the men of this epoch did the work with a clearness and force of thought that is as yet far from being appreciated.

The theological system thought out by Hosea Ballou and the men trained in his ideas has approached more nearly to logical consistency than any other which the Broad Church has furnished. It starts from the truth that love is the essence of God's nature, the source of creation's life, the test of all spiritual activities. It explains the incarnation as the manifestation of that love to man's intellect, the atonement as its appeal to his heart, regeneration as its effect upon his life. It defines retribution as the attitude of this love toward the sinful heart, forgiveness as the act which realizes this love to the penitent, salvation as the completion of love's work in the renewal of the life in higher spiritual relations. It proclaims the triumph of good over evil as the natural, inevitable and universal result of God's rule, the omnipotence of the heavenly will, the reign of love. That is a system which stands together. It

is consistent, harmonious, reasonable. It commends itself to every man's conscience, and does not go halting on its way.

## THE FAITH OF TO-DAY

The adoption of the Winchester Profession of Faith in 1803 was the practical determination of the outlines of the theology of the Universalist Church for a century at least. The controversy between Ballou and Turner touching the duration of punishment for sin beyond this life, though strenuous, was a side issue, and the great essentials of the Larger Faith, the faith of the Broad Churchman everywhere, have endured as the fundamentals of the Universalist faith, the express declarations of its pulpits and of its representative bodies. It stands for the belief in the universal Fatherhood of God, a relation growing out of His heart and disposition of Love. So that it is the belief, not only that we are sure to arrive, but that we may travel in confidence, if we go God's way. It presents Jesus Christ as the fullest embodiment of God which our human nature can contain, whose divinely ordained mission on earth and in heaven is the salvation of men, and their harmony with God. It regards man as a sinner, on his way to become a saint. It recognizes "lost souls" as spirits not yet rescued from the ways of sin. It believes in a hell, for-

ever raging in bad hearts, as long as they remain bad. It asserts the certainty of retribution, and the certainty also of its termination, as soon as its work of discipline and reformation is done. It declares its unfaltering conviction that the teachings of the Bible, the affirmations of reason, the promptings of man's highest nature, all point to the absolute triumph of good over evil, not by the segregation of evil, not by its perpetuation in one spot or in one group, but in its entire elimination from the creation, through the superior forces of good, in the hands of Jesus Christ. It is the one faith which can solve the bewildering problems of the present age, civilize civilization, christianize Christianity, socialize society, and sanctify the saints. It is the message of the doom of evil, the proclamation of the omnipotence of Good.

*References:* Introduction to the "Treatise on Atonement," John Coleman Adams. Fisher's "Short History." Brooks's "Our New Departure." Adams's "Hosea Ballou," in "Pioneers of Religious Liberty in America." Safford's "Hosea Ballou." "Columbian Universalist Congress," chap. 1, by Stephen Crane, D. D. "The Purpose of God," by J. Smith Dodge, D. D. Adams's "Universalism and the Broad Church Movement." "The Latest Word of Universalism."

## V. THE ETHICS OF THE FAITH

### THE NEW MOTIVES

With the new theological doctrines there came a great readjustment of motives, a revival of the purer ideals which marked the early Christian ages, and a reversal of the attitude which had for so many years made men cower and shrink from the thought of God. Of course the charge was made against the new faith that it took away every effectual motive for right conduct, and left the heart of man without any adequate reason for seeking salvation. It was flatly asserted that if the fear of hell were removed, there would be no obedience. But the Universalist holds that even if fear were quite outgrown there would be a mightier motive still, to duty, sacrifice and service. There is no incentive to right action so strong, so persistent, so prevailing, as love. The effect of Universalism is not to weaken men's sense of "the exceeding sinfulness of sin." On the contrary, sin never seems so abhorrent, so wicked, so outrageous, as when it is felt to be the act of our souls against the Divine Love, the defiance of our Heavenly Father, rebellion against kindness, mercy and justice. Nothing is so revolting to us as the thought of offending those we love, or who love us. Nothing

so surely halts us on the verge of evil-doing as the reflection that it will work harm to our friends. When we have grown to see that sin is a crime against the Holiest Love, the Love which God Himself bears to His children, we have seen sin at its ugliest, and recognized its enormity.

But the constraints of love are wider and stronger yet. There is no stronger bond and obligation to duty. Who sacrifices so much as he who sacrifices for love's sake? Who toils so unremittingly as he who has the inspiration of a great affection? Who gives himself in such complete renunciation as he who has this motive which he shares with God Himself? As a working force in the world it is yet in its infancy—as a spring of conduct, a principle in social order, a rule in trade, a policy among the nations. But it is giving us already the highest type of character the world has ever seen—the type fashioned after the pattern of Jesus Christ.

## THE NEW RESTRAINTS

Just as the new teaching concerning the destiny of man presented fresh and stronger motives for right conduct and right feeling, so it brought forward into the foreground a variety of powerful deterrents from wrong-doing. The doctrines which were assailed as fraught with loose and demoralizing ten-

dencies revealed a severe morality and a stern teaching which were a vast surprise to the world. The restraints put upon the will and the passions of man were forcible and convincing. There was the thought of the certainty of retribution, beginning here on the earth and continuing until its salutary work should be done. The thought of consequences is always a potent one, and few are beyond its influence. It deters the assassin from his deadly purpose. It dissuades the young man, tempted to his first dishonesty, and lured to the sins of the flesh. But this thought never asserts its full force until the consequences of sin are seen to be immediate. And if to this we add the prospect of consequences which are continuous, the effect is still more stringent. Such a doctrine Hosea Ballou taught, and drew down anathemas on his head for doing so. The orthodoxy of his time deferred all thought of punishment for sin till the future life; and it left always the loophole of a late repentance, as a possibility of escape. On the strength of this opportunity to save himself from hell by a timely antemortem penitence, many a man has allowed himself "the pleasures of sin for a season." But no such hope is held out to the true believer in Universalism. That is a teaching which makes retribution inevitable, as sure as the thunder after the lightning. As a conse-

quence, this doctrine operates as a most effectual restraint.

In still another particular the restraining influence of this faith has grown more evident with time and other developments. The Larger Faith asserts and enforces the doctrine of human brotherhood. The interrelation of men is one of the most elementary teachings of all its pulpits. Its ministers all labor to show that we are members one of another, and that if one member suffer, all members suffer with it. Could there be any greater deterrent from evil than the thought, abhorrent to any kind-hearted man, that his sins are a blow at the happiness of all whom he loves, all who have any dealings with him? The social ideals of our age enforce with new power the restraining influence of the Universalist doctrines concerning punishment.

## THE NEW DOCTRINE OF PENALTY

The effectiveness of the doctrines of the Larger Faith were increased and strengthened by the teachings of the new theology concerning the nature and operation of penalty in the soul of man. The old theology taught that penalty for sin was future, external to the soul, and avoidable by the acceptance of the atonement of Jesus Christ. The new teaching, on the other hand, insisted upon the

present, instant, continuous nature of penalty. There is no retardal of sentence, no delay in its infliction. No sooner is the evil deed committed than its ill consequences, its positive penalties, begin to manifest themselves. No immunity is possible. No device secures any soul from the broad and searching operation of the law. Sin means derangement of the moral nature, disorder among the spiritual faculties. It entails confusion and discord throughout the inner life. It involves pain, suffering, torment, varying with the gravity of the wrongdoing. An inward law, an invariable law, an immediate law, a continuous law, an effective law—this was the plain teaching of the new faith. Whatever objection may be urged against it, one criticism is forever debarred; it is not a doctrine which offers the sinner any hope of escape from the consequences of his evil acts. It is uncompromising in its warning to the offender.

But while the teaching of the Larger Faith concerning penalty insisted upon the divine law as certain, as the logical outcome of sin, and as justly proportioned and fitted to the offense, it also insisted that penalty is meant as a discipline for the offender, and that it is reformatory in its nature. It teaches that every hell in the creation is God's hell, and that He is using them all in the process of extirpating evil from the world. The "evan-

gel of evil" is in the good news of Jesus, who comes to save that which was lost.

## THE NEW DOCTRINE OF REWARDS

At the same time that it taught a new doctrine about penalty, and set new ideals before the minds of men regarding the sequences of sin, Universalism, in the hands of its early advocates, changed the whole ground of the expectation of reward as well. The thought of the Christian was withdrawn from the future and the unseen world, and from remote and deferred rewards, to be bestowed on the elect and the faithful, like prizes to the winners of a race. The new thought bade him look at once and within himself for the recompenses of righteousness. For right and love carry their own reward. Nothing can be bestowed on either which is of more value than the thing on which or for the attainment of which it is bestowed. Righteousness means nearness to God and a share in all the divine life. "Righteousness tendeth to life." "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose heart is stayed on thee." The one impregnable position in life is to be right with God. This attitude always assures tranquillity and composure. To be right and to have a heart full of love, is to be able to face pain, privation, persecution, and yet all through them to be strong and victorious.

Heaven, in this view, is not a state of prizes and of premiums heaped upon those who have successfully competed in the contests of righteousness. It is the estate into which the soul comes by the law of its own growth, if it be true to the great essentials of godliness. As there is no heaven for the healthy man greater than the blessedness of health, so there is no heaven for the loving and the good which can by any possibility be more blessed than just the estate of being good and loving. As we may truly say that virtue is its own reward, so we may add in paraphrase, that love is its own heaven. The heaven of Jesus was himself, his consciousness of divine love and approval, his sense of security and blessedness. So our heaven is not a ready-built place awaiting our souls hereafter; it is "a building of God," which we, with all other children of the Father, are slowly fashioning out of our own hearts and wills.

*References:* E. G. Brooks's "Our New Departure." Newman Smyth's "Christian Ethics," chap. 6. Martineau's "Hours of Thought on Sacred Things," discourse on "The Powers of Love." Vedder's "Socialism and the Ethics of Jesus," chap. 9. G. H. Emerson, "Sin and its Sequences," in the "Latest Word of Universalism." E. H. Capen, "Punishment Disciplinary," in "Columbian Congress." T. T. Munger, "The Method of Penalty," and "The Judgment," in "The Freedom of the Faith."

## VI. THE FAITH AS A SOCIAL LEAVEN

### THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN

The teachings of the Larger Faith have been a mighty and providential preparation of men's minds for the great social gospel of these latter days. It has steadfastly and consistently maintained the Fatherhood of God, and that doctrine of course carries with it the other truth of the Brotherhood of Man. Children of one Father are brothers and sisters of one another. Their relationship to one another comes through their relationship to God. Human beings resemble one another because of their common likeness to God. Wherever men meet, the common traits of the race form a means of "getting together," and they learn to say, as Paul did on landing in Italy, "Here we found brethren." Men are not brethren because they have the same physical traits, nor because they share the same needs and dependencies, nor because they experience the same joys and sorrows, or are partners in the same great interests. They are like one another in all these things because they are brethren. That brotherhood draws them into the most intimate associations, the most vital dependencies, so that their destinies are linked, one with another, inseparably and eternally. The classes into

which they divide themselves are accidental, the bonds that hold them together are essential. Already the ends of the earth are drawn together by the cords of interdependence. The markets in London respond to the crop conditions in India and Argentina. The plague in Bombay threatens the health of Constantinople. The circulation of benefits follows the acceptance of the brotherhood, and indeed is one of the evidences of the fact itself. The great family stands or falls together. Its blessings and its disasters are common experiences. Its final destiny must be one and indivisible. Lost souls are always lost brothers or sisters. Their final and total loss would be an everlasting sorrow and disaster to the saved which would forever prevent the realization of the bliss of heaven. As Whittier says, "can heaven itself be heaven and look unmoved on hell?" The great doctrines which find such acceptance to-day, involving this question of the rights and the privileges of all men together, are the direct and logical teaching of the Larger Faith.

## THE MOTIVE OF MISSIONS

The great revival of missions in modern times within the Christian Church began in the conviction that millions of souls were annually being swept into hell, because the gospel was not preached to them, and be-

cause they could not be saved unless it was. The motive of missions then was the salvation of the heathen from endless hell. It is natural and inevitable, therefore, that Universalism should be regarded as hostile in all its thought and principles to the current teaching and to the whole missionary movement. "Universalism," it used to be said, "cuts the nerve of missionary effort; for if all men are to be saved anyhow, of what use are all these strenuous efforts to save them by human agencies? If God means to save all men, He will do it in His good time, which no human power can hasten or affect." But it was not long before the real truth underlying the gospel message came to the surface, and it was seen that the real reason for the work of the missionary was to bring men, all men, all men everywhere, to a knowledge of Jesus Christ, and to show them the wonder and the power of his work. If men are to be saved, it will be by and through human means. It will be from the preaching of the Word, the repetition of the "old, old story." God nowhere promises to do all the work of salvation; some of that He leaves to His helping children. If we have any pity upon suffering men, we want to save them because they are suffering now, not because they may suffer at some future time, vague in the distance. The motive of modern missions is the realiza-

tion of the brotherhood of man, which binds us to share all our blessings with our fellows; which makes those that are strong bear the burdens of the weak; which is filled with a great compassion for the weak, the suffering, the needy, in all things, but especially in the things of the spirit; which will delay the happiness of the saints till the last sinner is recovered. The motive of modern missions is to save men from the sins which are the real dread and curse of the soul, not from the penalty of sin, which is an entirely different matter. The Christian sees that he is a citizen of the world, and owes to that world the rule of the kingdom of heaven, which is to be the rule of the redeemed nations. He sees so many souls lagging in the march to the goal of the redeemed life that he feels the responsibility for bringing them forward. The latter motive is a bigger one than the former; the only trouble with it is that it requires bigger men and women to administer it. But they are on the way.

## SOCIETY AND THE CRIMINAL

The doctrine of the Brotherhood carries many implications of faith and duty, among them the ideal of conduct toward the hindermost men in society. It early became clear, in the light of this teaching, that society, like every other organization, is handicapped by

its weakest members. The class in school is held back by the dullard; the wage in any industry is set by the man who is willing to work for the lowest amount; the health of any community is always menaced by the habits of the dirtiest and the most irresponsible. This discovery has affected the attitude of men toward the criminal, the very hindermost man in the social order. The Larger Faith has largely modified the practises of the penologists as well as of those having the interests of the criminal class at heart. It is now seen that if punishment is meant for the safeguarding of society, then it must aim to reform the offender, since, as long as he remains a criminal, he remains also the threat to society's peace and safety. The social goal is unattainable until crime and the criminal are eliminated. There can be no ideal society while sin and crime endure. For society must carry all its members, either as aids or as encumbrances. All punishment must, therefore, have in view the future of the offender as well as his present, and must aim to cure, to reform, and to reclaim him while it never loses its character as penalty. This forces the ultimatum. Society can not tolerate the criminal. He is the foe of social peace and success. He must therefore be driven out of society. He must be put off the earth. And the only way that can be done is either to

reform him or to prevent him, stop the making of him or reform him when made.

Thus the Larger Faith is parent of the modern conception of penalty for crime. That theory is that the state should aim to correct while it punishes, to give up none of its criminals as hopeless, to reform and not to doom its felons. That means a nobler spirit in the prison and a higher intelligence on the bench. It means the children's court, the probation of offenders, the suspended sentence, the reformatory and the indeterminate sentence, the employment of the prisoner at remunerative labor. The great reforms which are already justifying themselves to the world could never have come about but for the growth of a liberalized Christianity, made rational and humane through larger views of God's government and purposes. There could be no more convincing evidence of the practical working power of Universalism than the new attitude of society towards its criminals.

## THE CHAMPIONSHIP OF THE WEAK

The faith which represents the Infinite Strength as giving itself perpetually for the benefit of the weak and of the outcast could not present any other ethics for the human conscience. It was logically certain therefore that the influence of the Larger Faith

should be to create a large and loving sympathy for all those causes which need the championship of strength. So its advocates have been leaders in the great reforms of thought and of social custom which have marked the recent centuries. There has been a natural sympathy between the teachings of Universalism and the principles which have made for the emancipation of slaves, all over the world, the moral and physical elevation of women, the protection of little children. The right to hold human beings in bondage can never be reconciled with the great fact of the brotherhood of man. The common fatherhood of the race is forever against the enslavement of any member of that race by any other. The same truths forbid the brothers of the family to oppress their sisters. Womanhood has a natural defense from oppression and from abuse, in the principles of Universalism. The new life of women and for women will always flourish and grow in the airs of a liberal religious faith. In like manner has childhood been released from a stupid and belated treatment, and given a fair chance to be and to grow in the freedom of its God-given powers. For all these things have been presented to the strong and able natures, the efficient of God, as their duty and solemn obligation. To secure for all God's children the things that are their due

but which they are not able to secure for themselves without help, is the duty of the strong. That is Christ's doctrine of the relation of the strong to the weak. How it has worked out in the light and the inspiration of the Larger Faith, the pages will show which record the progress of freedom, the rise of modern womanhood, the unburdening of childhood. The spirit of a larger justice than ever this earth knew before, marks the era in which the greater theology has paved the way for the broader ethics of our times.

## THE NEW FAITH AND THE NEW SOCIAL ORDER

The New Theology and the New Social Ideals have grown up side by side, and each has doubtless influenced the other. But it is becoming perfectly evident that there is no theology in sight which will harmonize with the new forces and the advancing principles of the social and industrial world save only the doctrines which rest upon the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. A theology like that calls for social justice, for common efforts, for the merging of aims, for recognition of equality of rights, for recognition of the great community of interests between man and man. A social program like that calls for a theology which recognizes the common origin, the common interests, the

common destiny of the whole human race. The theology of the future must square with the highest ideals of human justice, kindness, brotherhood, law. The sociology of the future must rest on the great truths of the Christ, fatherhood, brotherhood, the law of love, of righteousness, of sacrifice. The law of brotherhood is being put in practice in a thousand new and blessed ways. The law of the Fatherhood is the war-cry of the reformers everywhere. Two things are most important in their bearing on the well-being of mankind. One is that the social reformers shall recognize the affinity of all their doctrines for the gospel of Jesus; the other is that the people of the churches must go forward to a host of new duties such as the new emergencies have developed. The moral law must be made to cover the corporation and the trust. The labor union must go to church. The social reforms must graft themselves upon the churches; the tree of worship must bear the rich fruits of an enlightened and a liberal theology. The sooner we get men to realize that the human race is bound on a very long journey, and that the end of that is and must be the same for all, the sooner will come the recognition of the fact that selfishness is postponing the millennium and swelling the ills and the woes of life, and must be crowded out of the social order. In their last deep thoughts,

the religion of the Larger Faith is the inspiration of all reverent and sane socialists and progressives.

*References:* The books of Walter Rauschenbusch, Francis G. Peabody, Rev. Chas. H. Vail. Chas. Cuthbert Hall's "Christ and the Human Race." "Our Word and Work for Missions." "The Columbian Congress." Tracts of the Women's National Missionary Society. Selleck's "The Spiritual Outlook." Olympia Brown's "Crime and Its Remedies," in "Columbian Congress." Boies's "Science of Penology." Cooke's "Unitarianism in America." John G. Adams, "Fifty Notable Years." J. W. Hanson, "The Leaven at Work." Vedder's "Socialism and the Ethics of Jesus."

## VII. THE FAITH AND WORSHIP

### THE MOTIVE TO WORSHIP

The Universalist Church has always stood for worship and the outward observances of religion. Its faith presents all the ancient and still valid reasons for the service of God by common rites and observances, the gathering of people in churches, the practice of prayer, the preaching of the Word. But it does more than this, in its representations of God, which are calculated to increase the motives to reverence, to deepen and strengthen the springs of love, and to fortify the faith of man which the old theology so often tempted to doubt and to unbelief. There is not, in the Larger Faith, a single article which puts a strain on the most critical and halting belief. Its statements all tend to render man thankful, devout and worshipful. For they "magnify the Lord," and, like the heavens above, "declare the glory of God."

There are three great motives to worship —awe, gratitude, and love. Every one of these is enhanced in the heart which trusts in the unfailing and all-powerful love of God. For this faith moves us to a deeper reverence for that Power which is stronger than evil and will overthrow it; to a deeper thankfulness for the glorious outlook of the creation;

to a deeper love toward the God who is so wonderful in His love and mercy to us. Thus the progress of a true liberalism is toward more worship, not less, louder praises, not fainter.

Though the Universalist Church has grown and developed in a period of spiritual dearth and religious depression, it has fortunately escaped the errors of such times, and has never failed to connect the spirit of religion with the expression of it, the inner and the outward phases of the soul's life.

## FORM AND RITUAL

At a meeting of representatives of the ministry and laity of the Universalists in America, held at Philadelphia in 1790, the matter of a uniform ritual or form of religious service was discussed. But the staunch congregationalism which has always characterized the church effectually prevented any such agreement, and the societies all went their own ways without reference to anything like uniformity or unity. Most of the people who made up the membership of the growing denomination were used, in the various sects from which they came, to the simple forms of the "dissenting" bodies in England and America, the plain worship of Puritan, Presbyterian and Independent. That, therefore, has been the type on which the "divine service" of these churches has been formed.

To the earlier Universalists and to many even to-day, it has been almost a matter of principle to preserve the exceedingly simple forms of the Puritan bodies, and to leave every church and every minister to make a separate and individual ritual.

But there have always been in the church many who were not satisfied with this state of things, nor with the rather bald and unattractive simplicity of the "Order of Service" which prevails. Their zeal and piety have combined to attempt, in several quarters, the creation of a liturgical form of worship, and to furnish such a liturgy as would meet the requirements of the new faith. As early as 1839 such a prayer book was prepared by Menzies Rayner. Another was offered in 1857, by A. C. Thomas, an admirable work, which never obtained a footing. In 1864 Dr. Charles H. Leonard, then of Chelsea, Mass., published his "Book of Prayer," which has had more of a vogue than perhaps any other liturgy, and is used by many churches, and by many more ministers in the special services for which it provides dignified and appropriate forms. Still another book called the "Gloria Patri" was prepared by Drs. T. B. Thayer and L. J. Fletcher, which has had recent revision, and now bears the official sanction of the General Convention.

## THE CHRISTIAN SACRAMENTS

According to the universal practise of Protestantism, the Universalist Church recognizes the two sacraments of the Lord's Supper and Baptism. The laws of the churches in fellowship with the General Convention expressly require that "in every church the communion of the Lord's Supper shall be observed at such times as the laws thereof prescribe; and at every such service all persons present, whether members or not, who may deem it a duty or a privilege to do so, shall be invited to participate." The same laws provide that "baptism may be administered to adults in such form as they may wish." The common manner, however, is by sprinkling, and few desire immersion. Among the "Recommendations" of the "Manual" is the following: "It is recommended that on Easter Day a Service of Recognition be held, at which time persons baptized in childhood, and others, may be welcomed by suitable rites to membership in the church." Another recommendation is to the effect that "one Sunday in each year be set apart, to be denominated Children's Sunday—in all cases where practicable the second Sunday in June, or as near thereto as possible; and parents and guardians shall be encouraged and invited to bring their children to the altar on that day for baptism, or for dedication to the Lord."

The last clause alludes to the objection held to infant baptism, and provides for the observance of a substitute rite, without the use of water.

The Sacraments are not regarded by Universalists as having any magical or supernatural efficacy, but as most important and vital symbols of spiritual facts and forces. The Lord's Supper is viewed as a memorial rite, quickening the memory of Jesus Christ and strengthening our loyalty and love to him. The efficacy of baptism lies in its witness by an outward act to the putting away of sin and self-will, and the consecration of the heart to God and His service. This view takes these noble ceremonies out of the region of the occult and the mystical, and gives them a standing among the great ethical and spiritual institutions of all religious experience.

## PERSONAL CONSECRATION

Although the Universalist Church was called and set apart to do a large and absorbing work with the intellectual convictions of the churches of America, nevertheless it did not absorb itself in the task to the forgetfulness of other and equally vital interests. The time never was when the hearts of our leaders and people were not aglow with the fires of a true religious life. The denomination has never moved off the track on which it was

started by the pious and perfervid Murray and by the devout and reverent Ballou. There were many who joined the early Universalist movement simply because it meant revolt and action and conflict. They were men of war, and war they would have. But in spite of their chilling and retarding influence, the Universalist Church has kept faith with its forefathers in the maintenance of its Christian faith and spirit and expression. It has insisted on personal loyalty to the person of Jesus as a duty of the individual and of the whole organized church. It has never feared nor hesitated to call him "Lord and Master, Saviour and Messiah, Son of Man and Son of God," nor to insist that those who claim to be his followers make a public vow of loyalty to him as a test and a witness to their personal discipleship.

Thus there has grown up in the Universalist Church, a real and characteristic Christian life, as truly its own as the Churchman's or the Friend's. This life has indeed been far from realized in the wonderful depth and richness and fervor of motive which our great fundamentals warrant. But the Larger Faith has been more than a theological idea; it has been a spiritual life. Its history is more than a record of controversy; it has been a sum of Christian lives. It is a story of belief quickened by service, of faith

ripened into love. Its appeal is, has been and will be, that all who believe that the whole human race is to be saved shall do the one thing in their power to hasten and realize that day, namely, to be themselves reconciled to God and in harmony with the divine will, members of Christ's body on earth and fighting soldiers in his army of service and conquest.

*References:* Brooks's "Our New Departure." Dr. Rugg's "The Church." Selleck's "The Spiritual Outlook." Fisher's "Short History." Eddy's "History of Universalism." "Manual of the Universalist General Convention." Adams's "Fifty Notable Years."

## VIII. THE FAITH AT WORK

### SOWING THE SEED

The early methods of the believers in Universalism were as directly and enthusiastically missionary as those of the early Methodists. They early realized that if they were to get a hearing for the truth committed to their charge, they must go to war on its behalf. The popular churches were arrayed against them with a bitterness and a bigotry which would not give the smallest allowance of approval or of tolerance to the new heresy. For avowed Universalists, in the theological controversies of that time, there was no quarter given. They must wage a stout warfare for the faith they held, or it would gain no hearing whatever.

So they took up the work and began their crusade. They assumed the common Protestant position, and made the Bible the ground of their argument and the court of their appeal. But they refused to read their Bible with the eyes of other people. They insisted that it be used with due regard for the human reason and conscience. They believed implicitly in the right of private judgment, and of religious liberty. In this spirit and this conviction they went to the people. They rallied them in churches when they could, in halls and court-rooms and school-

houses when churches were denied them. They carried on the endless debate in the country store and the stage-coach and the hay-field. They made a pulpit of the wood-pile and the shoemaker's bench. Their preachers expounded the word, and the laymen passed it along. Pamphlet, book and newspaper carried the argument to the intellect and the appeal to the moral sense of mankind. The northern United States were traversed from Maine to California. As numbers increased churches were organized, houses of worship were built, organization was effected. But the preaching was of necessity in large measure controversial, the missionary work destructive. That was an inevitable result of the resistance and hostility encountered. There must always be a protest and challenge of the old thought before a lodgment can be found for the new. The forests of the north could never have been transformed into fertile farms without the sharp, unflinching axe of the woodman; no more could the field have been prepared for the liberal faith, without the rude shock of the great controversy of the Larger Faith with the old New England theology.

## THE FOUNDING OF SCHOOLS

One of the conspicuous characteristics of the Universalist Church has been its sympathy with the higher education and with

the spread of learning. Though its founders were men of slender education, and few of its leaders from the cultured classes, yet they had hardly formed themselves into a working church before they began to take steps for the higher education of their children. Their first thought was to provide for the training of the ministry, that the advocates and public defenders of the faith might have at their command the resources of sound learning and wide scholarship. To be sure, there were many among the fathers of the church who feared the influence of the schools, and deemed the Bible the only college necessary for the study and the understanding of the truths of the faith. This is the reason that for fifty years there were no theological schools in the denomination, and all the training of the young men preparing for the ministry was the private studies they undertook with the elder preachers in their homes.

Among those who thus undertook to fit young men for the ministry were Hosea Ballou, 2d, John S. Lee, and Thomas J. Sawyer. So devoutly did the latter believe in the necessity of the higher education and the instruction of the ministry that he left his post of distinction in New York city and took charge of the Clinton Liberal Institute, founded in 1831, which had prior to that time given instruction to thirty-seven young men pre-

paring for the ministry. This was the first permanent and successful institution of the kind under Universalist support. In the last sixty years three theological schools have been established in the United States, and one in Japan. Four colleges—Tufts, St. Lawrence, Buchtel, and Lombard—have been founded by Universalists, and for many years remained under their control. But the day of the denominational college is past, and already one of these institutions has passed to the charge of the city in which it is located, and the others are as far as possible divesting themselves of the denominational associations and management. But their existence and work are a testimony to the zeal of the church for education and an adequate ministry.

The secondary schools and academies founded by Universalists have numbered, first and last, about a score, in various parts of the country. But the growth of the public high school has taken their work out of their hands, and but three of them survive; all of these—Westbrook, Goddard and Dean—are still doing front rank work for the training of youth.

## THE ORGANIZATION OF WOMEN

For a century after the preaching of John Murray, the women of the Universalist Church had no distinctive organization, and

undertook no specific work. They were content to merge their identity as workers for the church in that of their brethren, and much might be said of the helpfulness and the sacrifices of the women during these early days of the struggle with the great opposition. Almost the first auxiliary association in every new society was a "Ladies' Aid Society," which always justified its name.

In 1869, in the enthusiasm which attended the raising of the fund of $100,000 in commemoration of the centenary of Universalism in America, the women of the church organized themselves to aid in the canvass. Their share of the total was $35,000, and the organization then formed was continued as a separate auxiliary body, in affiliation with the General Convention, and accepting its authority. It was for many years known as the "Woman's Centenary Association." But as that name gradually lost significance it was changed to "The Women's National Missionary Association," a title which sufficiently indicates its general aims and work. It won its way to permanence through much opposition, as there were many who did not regard the separate organization of the women with any favor whatever. They thought the tendency of such organization would be divisive and weakening, both for the Convention and for the Association. Dr. E. G.

Brooks, in his "Our New Departure," has a chapter on "Man and Woman," in which he deplores and resists the tendencies to separate organizations for women in the church, disapproves of the woman ministry, and sees only evil in the appointment of women as delegates to the convention bodies. These objections, however, did not represent the views of the majority of the churches, and the career of the women at work for the church has more than justified their push for separate action.

It has become the custom of the church to admit women to its ministry on the same terms as men, and to make them eligible as delegates to the conventions. Most of the educational institutions under the auspices of the Universalist Church have admitted women on equal terms with men. The sentiment of all recent times has been hospitable to the higher, freer ideals of woman's life and activity. To-day the women of the Universalist Church are as well organized, as active, as efficient in Christian life, as may be found in any church in America.

## FOREIGN MISSIONS

For a hundred years after its organization the Universalist Church took no active part and showed little theoretic interest in the work of foreign missions. Indeed, for a full

quarter of this time, none of the American churches were showing any interest whatever in the preaching of the Word to heathen peoples. It was not till about 1810 that the great missionary movement in this country got under way. At that time the Universalists were in the heat of a struggle to present a Christian conception of Christianity to their own countrymen, and consequently had no time or resources to expend in the illumination of the heathen.

Besides this, the early missionary campaigns of the American churches were so completely involved in the dogmas of the popular theology, that to approve the one seemed to carry assent to the other. The motive of the missionary crusade was avowedly to save the heathen from the impending doom which was assumed to hang over them, of endless torment in hell. To have joined in the common work would have been to concede the truth of the common motive, and this Universalists could not do.

But the years were bringing changes in the thought of both parties in theology. The evangelical position was broadening to an interest in the present condition of human souls; and the believers in the Larger Faith were coming to a consciousness that they who believed in the universal Fatherhood owed something to the universal brotherhood. In

1882 the General Convention declared, "We hail with gratification the rising spirit among our people in favor of Foreign Missions, and recognize it as a favorable indication of a deeper sense of responsibility for the salvation of the world." By the year 1890 sufficient funds were raised to warrant a beginning, and George Landor Perin, with Wallace Cate, newly graduated from Tufts Theological School, and Miss Margaret C. Schouler of Boston, were chosen as the first missionaries of the Universalist Church in Japan. From that time the mission has been steadily maintained. In the words of a friendly observer of its work, the Rev. Dr. Sunderland: "There are four missionaries from America and five ordained Japanese preachers and pastors. Work has been done in twelve cities and towns; permanent churches have been organized and maintained in three. Besides the churches with their regular activities, and considerable outside preaching and lecturing, there have been established and carried on a school for boys and young men, a school for girls and young women, a home for young women (which has now a fine building of its own), a theological school (maintained for several years, but at present suspended for want of funds), several clubs and classes (among the number a "Good Citizenship Society" which has become large and popular), and a Post

Office Mission. There has also been the publication of many tracts and books, and of a small monthly religious magazine, besides much other work. It is not easy to overestimate the value of a mission which for seventeen years has labored in all these ways to promote and exemplify Christianity in its most simple and practical forms,—the Christianity of Christ, the Christianity of God's Fatherhood and of human brotherhood."

## THE YOUNG PEOPLE'S CHRISTIAN UNION

The strong and fruitful forces in the Universalist Church which led to the formation of the Young People's Christian Union undoubtedly originated in the same impulse which led so many of the denominations to join the Christian Endeavor movement. This splendid organization, by its example and spirit, created an awakening of the youth of the American churches which proved one of the most notable of the century. It taught the churches what a vast, unused resource they had in their young men and women; it showed the young people that they could effect great things in their own name and right, and sent them to the work of religious education, of missionary effort, and of social service. Universalists from the first were interested in this society, and many local churches organized their young people along

its lines. A pioneer organization, the Young People's Missionary Association, whose name indicates its aims, had failed to appeal to the church as a whole, and the new movement had to meet a spirit of discouragement and of timidity.

But about 1889 the time seemed ripe for a new and vigorous attempt to be made to form a national union of our forces, and a call was sent out from the parish in Bay City, Dr. S. H. Roblin being then the pastor, to get together and organize. The next convention, held at Lynn, in October, 1889, was the occasion of the gathering of representatives from the young people's societies of thirteen different states, who speedily organized a national body which has ever since been known as the Young People's Christian Union. This organization has, like the Woman's Missionary Association, worked as an auxiliary to the General Convention, always advising with that body and co-operating with it. It has carried on most successful and effective missionary work, establishing, with the aid of the Convention, new churches at Harriman, Tenn.; at Atlanta, Geo.; at Little Rock, Ark.; at St. Paul, Minn.; at Chattanooga, Tenn. It has conducted a spirited and up-to-date newspaper, a system of regular contributions for missions, and a constant search for candidates for the min-

istry. Its attitude has always been that of loyalty and of faith manifesting itself in works.

*References:* Brooks's "Our New Departure." Murray's Autobiography. Whittemore's "Life of Ballou." Fisher's "Short History." Eddy's "History of Universalism." "The Woman's Centenary Association," by Mrs. Cordelia Quinby, in "The Columbian Congress." "Our Word and Work for Missions." "Foreign Missionary Work," by George L. Perin, in "The Columbian Congress." The files of *Onward*. Miniature History, 25th Anniversary Convention Y. P. C. U.

# IX. LITERATURE AND THE FAITH

## THE TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURE

The appeal of the Universalist, like that of his Protestant forebears, has always been to the Bible as an authority in things spiritual. He drew upon the Holy Book as upon an arsenal of weapons, every text a sharp sword of the Spirit, to slay the foes of the truth. Deeper study of the Word showed him that this method of using it was false and misleading. But when he came to the higher view of the Bible, and to a perception of relative values in its pages, a new expository method, which argued from principles rather than from isolated passages, and rested upon the great fundamentals rather than on explicit statements and disjointed "proof-texts," equipped him with a more irresistible armament for his faith. Finding in Scripture the progress of revelation from the power and the righteousness to the universal love of the Father; discerning that love is the final and the decisive element in the nature of God; that prophecy everywhere forecasts the overthrow of evil and the triumph of good; that the creation is to be delivered from the bondage of corruption; that the uplifted Christ is to draw all men unto himself; that God is to be all and in all, he found himself swept along as on a

mighty tide of testimony, to the conclusion that the outcome of the moral order is to be described in terms of harmony, peace and joy. When he read how the woman in the parable of the Master searches for the lost coin "until she finds it," and how the shepherd does the same by the lost sheep, and yet again how the sinful son turns at last from his sins and seeks his father's house, he could not resist the belief that these apologues represent the divine will and the destiny of the human. He found in the New Testament the exultant assurance that he who came to seek and to save that which was lost was to see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied. He read the solemn words in the closing lines of the Revelation foretelling a day when God shall wipe away tears from off all faces. In all these utterances the Universalist of the later day, reading in the light of a new and better scholarship, has been impressed with the fact that, in the new trial of his faith by a more critical generation, the testimony of Scripture is more overwhelmingly in justification of his contention than in the old one. On one fact alone, which stands out clear and indisputable in the evidence, Universalism may rest its case that the Bible witnesses to its truth. That fact is the eternal predominance and power of Love. If Love is to prevail in the universe, then hell is doomed to perish.

## THE WITNESS OF THE POETS

The Universalist faith has always been fed and fostered very largely by the greatest and the most serious of the poets. For it is a faith of large vision, and could only be held by those who are capable of insight into the purposes and the activities of the Creator of all things. The poet is a seer, a prophet, and we see with his eyes the vision of the hereafter, the outcome of life and of death. The greatest of these seers have a message for man of hope and of confidence, a triumphant note assuring of victory at last, for all that makes for right and truth. They analyze with deepest penetration the moral life of the soul. The "Divine Comedy" of Dante is an allegory of the eternal world, and illustrates the fundamental contention of the Larger Faith, that heaven and hell are inward facts, made out of man's own nature, and that the drama of sin, retribution, and restoration goes on within the inmost soul. He grasps too the central truth of all life and death, the supremacy and the eternity of the love of God.

The world as Shakespeare sees it is a realm of order and of law, the infraction of which brings tragedy and wreck. His tragedies show life broken and interrupted by sin. His comedies carry life on, beyond sin, through suffering and repentance, to the

restoration of the divine order and the lost harmony of life. In the great drama of Goethe the poet, in the purification of Marguerite and the salvation at the last of Faust himself, sounds the note of hope and coming triumph for the whole creation. That great and powerful group of poets, Burns and Byron and Shelley, who set themselves against the hateful theology of their time, were allies and pioneers of the larger faith that was even in their time forming in the hearts of men. Their successors in the poetry of England and America took up the strain, in ever increasing boldness, of trust in the largest love, the brightest hope for man. Tennyson touches his highest inspiration in the prophecy of good, "at last, far off, at last to all." Browning glories in the trust that "God's in His heaven, all's right with the world." Hawthorne's "Scarlet Letter" and "Marble Faun" are prose epics of the redemption of the soul through suffering and repentance. Whittier's "Eternal Goodness" puts an adamant corner-stone under the feet of faith in his two lines:

> "I only know I can not drift
> Beyond His love and care."

Whenever modern literature speaks its final word for man the individual or man the race, it leaves him disappearing in the light.

## THE WITNESS OF SCIENCE

In the literature of the last century, that which relates to science forms a very important and considerable part. That part, moreover, had a most important bearing on the spreading faith in Universalism. For as science became familiar and Universalism spread, it became apparent how many ideas they presented in common, and how each supported the other. The trend of scientific thought, for example, has been steadily toward the assertion of the spiritual origin of things, of a soul at the heart of nature, of mind as the source or basis of matter, not matter as the basis of mind. In cordial response to this doctrine, Universalism affirms its belief in the biblical truth, "God is a Spirit." Science presents to the mind the unity of law, of force, of all the processes in the creation. Universalism asserts the unity of the destiny of the moral world, the world, in other words, of souls and wills. So it appeals to science as sanctioning, at least, its faith in the united destiny of all mankind. Science affirms a vast law or principle of progress, the steady advance of all life to higher levels and to greater efficiency. The Larger Faith reads in human history a constant, unending, upward struggle, pointing to a time when good shall prevail over evil, when holiness shall conquer sin, and all things

be brought into harmony with the will and purpose of Almighty God. It is a famous sentence of Herbert Spencer that "Evil tends perpetually to disappear;" and to this he adds the conclusion, "The development of the ideal man is logically certain." Spencer's most brilliant disciple, John Fiske, sums up the teaching of Darwin in his conclusion that we may look forward to the time when "in the truest sense the kingdom of this world shall become the kingdom of Christ, and he shall reign forever, king of kings and lord of lords." The doctrine of evolution has reinforced the Larger Faith at a hundred points, and still the end is not. The newer science of sociology, in showing the solidarity of man, and the rise or fall of all society together, puts the most powerful argument yet discovered into the hands of those who hold that there can be no final division of the human family, a part to suffer forever in hell, a part to enjoy an endless bliss. Thus do the teachings of the literature of the later science and those of the Larger Faith run parallel to each other, and lead to the same inspiring conclusions.

*References:* John W. Hanson's "The Leaven at Work," and other volumes. Dr. George A. Gordon's "God All in All," Sermon XX, in "Through Man to God." Farrar's "Mercy and Judgment," and "Eternal Hope." The poets named. Browning's "Rabbi Ben Ezra," and "Abt Vogler." Lowell's "Si Descendero,"

"Prometheus." Holmes' "Wind-Clouds and Star-Drifts." Gerald Massey, Mrs. Browning, Leigh Hunt. Longfellow's "Masque of Pandora." "Christus Victor," Henry N. Dodge. John Fiske's "Destiny of Man" and "Through Nature to God." Shutter's "Applied Evolution." Powell's "Our Heredity from God." Newman Smyth's "Through Science to Faith." Drummond's "Ascent of Man."

# X. THE BIBLE AND THE FAITH

## THE NATURE OF THE BIBLE

The Winchester Profession, adopted in the year 1803 as an authorized statement of the belief of the Universalist churches of America, begins thus: "We believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments contain a revelation of the character of God, and of the duty, interest and final destination of mankind." "The Five Principles of Universalism," adopted at Chicago, nearly one hundred years later, declares as its third affirmation, that this church believes in "the trustworthiness of the Bible as containing a revelation from God." Universalists believe in the Bible. They believe that its pages were a part of God's method of making known to men His character and purposes. They therefore acknowledge its authority and accept its teachings. They believe that, as the earth in its early ages was prepared by a Divine Hand to be the dwelling-place of man, so the Bible was slowly prepared, by that same power, to be the Book of Religion for mankind. They see in it the choicest remains of a great literature which records in many ways the unfolding of certain great spiritual truths, which constitute the basis of a universal religion. It records the training of a nation up to a right conception

of God and all His dealings with His children. It tells the story of the progress of the truths of the spiritual world, from their imperfect beginnings in Abraham, to their perfect manifestation in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. They hold that it is a literature, not a single volume; that it covers centuries of time; that it was written by many hands and from many points of view; and that its parts have a varying value, in their ethical import and teachings and in the clearness with which they set forth the nature of God. They believe that the knowledge of God grew gradually, till it culminated in Jesus the Christ; and that the Bible tells the tale of this growth and this highest incarnation in a single soul. That it is not an infallible book; that its statements are often in conflict with one another; that the moral standards are not the same in Judges, for example, as in the Fourth Gospel—all these things are conceded. But the vital fact remains, that the seed of truth planted in Abraham's soul grew and expanded, till it ripened into the "mind of Christ." This evolution of the truth is recorded in the Bible.

## INSPIRATION AND REVELATION

Universalists, for the most part, hold the modern, or historical, view of the Bible. They regard it as a human book recording a

divine process. Its inspiration lies in the lives and the souls of the people to whom God gave this new and quickening view of Himself. In the course of the years this insight broadened and deepened, until it was fully shown in the mind of the Christ. That process is called revelation. Inspiration is the quickening and enlightenment of certain souls and peoples, in the great truths of the spiritual world. Revelation is the proclamation of the truth, by thought, by deed, by inner life and spirit. The record of revelation is the story of the rise and growth of this spirit of insight, and the work of those in whom it is manifest. This threefold process is like a lighthouse. Inspiration is like the chemical forces in combustion, which produce the light. Revelation is the lantern which converts these rays into a broad shaft of light and carries it to the horizon. The Bible, or the record of that revelation, is the tower which uplifts and protects the light and the lantern. Inspiration was the spirit of God in the soul of prophet, apostle and Christ. Revelation was their speech to the world. The Bible is the story of these inspired men and the record of what they have to say.

In this view of the Bible the existence of errors in its text or of a very human point of view on the part of the authors, of varying ethical standards and spiritual insight pos-

sessed by David and by Paul, of contradictions, even, and mis-stated date or name—these difficulties do not touch the trustworthiness of the inspiration or of the revelation. They are only defects in the tower, and do not crack the lantern nor yet put out the light.

## THE BIBLE AND THEOLOGY

Universalists have always found their Larger Faith within the pages of the Bible. But they have found it there as the miner finds the gold in the ore; it must be smelted before it can be used. The gold must be separated from the impurities with which it is mixed; and the truth must be separated from the human errors which obscure and distort it. Fire, water, quicksilver, are means by which the earthly gold is won from its alloys and baser mixtures. The human reason and the Holy Spirit are the God-given means by which the everlasting truth is separated from what is earthly and transient in the Bible. That is the way in which the theology of the Bible itself was originally evolved. Age after age the Hebrew meditated upon God and righteousness and duty. Age after age God endowed him with more and more of vision, of sensitiveness to the truth, of insight into the mind of God. Inspiration from above and aspiration from below have enabled the mind of the child to understand in a

measure the heart of the Infinite Father. The same process is involved in the separation of the truth about God from the human element in the Scriptures. It has to be disengaged, for one thing, from the Hebrew tongue. The thought is God's, but it comes to us in the language of Isaiah and Hosea and Paul and James; and these all have peculiarities of speech for which allowance must be made. It has to be discerned through the coloring of Hebrew thought, which imparts an atmosphere all its own. The work of this interpretation is through the reason and the spirit. As these grow and expand in the soul of man they become better and better prepared to deal with the deep things of the soul. Thus theology is the re-interpretation, year after year, of the word of the Lord in the light of the increasing reason and spiritual vision of the human race.

## THE BIBLE AND CONDUCT

The Winchester Profession declared that "holiness and true happiness are inseparably connected." The same document affirms that "the holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments contain a revelation of the duty, interest and final destination of mankind." The necessary conclusion is that if we are to attain that holiness which is the key to that happiness, we shall need to instruct ourselves

out of that Book which shows us our way to the highest good and the immortal blessing of our souls. The notion that the Bible is an antiquated and obsolete book is, therefore, no part of the teaching of the Universalist faith. It is held to be the corner-stone of our ethics and of our everyday conduct. We need the Bible more than ever, to abate our feverish self-seeking, cleanse our inner vision, supply us with a true religious atmosphere. We must not regard our Bible as a medicine; we need it as a food. We take it in doses as old-fashioned invalids took their fresh air, a little at a time, through a crack in the window or the door. We need, on the other hand, to be immersed in its truths, in its spirit, in its ideals and motives, as men go forth into the open air and take it as their daily food and their nightly drink. The Bible becomes the power of God unto salvation when it is imbibed every day, when we live in daily companionship with Isaiah and Amos and Paul and Jesus Christ. For thus we keep in touch with the eternal principles of the true life, or with what Jesus calls "eternal life." That is the same thing as keeping in mind the everlasting laws of God. Let us take care of the eternities, and the times will take care of themselves. If we get the true spirit of the Bible we shall not only keep up with the times, we shall be ahead of them.

## THE BIBLE AND THE MODERN SPIRIT

The believers in the Larger Faith ground themselves in the Bible because, for another reason, they hold it to be the most modern of books, and the best adapted to the new age, which is so plainly in sight. Its vitality is best shown by the wide and profound hold it has taken upon modern life. Modern life does not begin to have affected the Bible to anything like the extent to which the Bible has affected modern life. The Twentieth Century civilization, imperfect as it is, nevertheless draws its finest traits from the standards and from the spirit of the Hebrew Scriptures. It is saturated with Bible ideas, Bible principles, Bible life. We owe a certain debt to Greece, and another to Rome, and another to England. But none of these lands and races have projected themselves into our lives as the Hebrew has. The best things in us—thought, life, spirit—are biblical. Our ideas of God, our standards of duty, our virtues and our motives to righteousness, our faith in heaven, our hope of the millennium—all these elements of our highest life are the heritage of Israel, coming to us through our Christian lineage and history and experience. The great goals toward which we struggle were set deep in our hearts by Biblemen.

Nor will it be different in the great and

wonderful future opening on the nations. Still, as in the past and the present, the Bible is destined to hold its own as the indispensable text-book of the peoples who in their own blind, stumbling way are pushing up to the ideals of the Lord Jesus Christ. The ideals of the reformed society, in which the races and the classes of the world shall sit down in common amity and consort together in brotherhood, are as old as the Hebrew prophets, and as vigorous as the coming man. The real democracy, the best conception of a socialistic state, are but reorganization of society on the basis of the Golden Rule and of the Second Great Commandment. The devotees of all the new thought and socialistic schemes should go back to the Bible; they certainly can not get ahead of it.

*References:* Gladden's "Who Wrote the Bible?" Sunderland's "What Is the Bible?" Kent's "Historical Bible." Newton's "Right and Wrong Uses of the Bible." Dr. Charles Briggs's works, here and there. Newman Smyth's "Old Faith in New Light." Joseph Smith Dodge's "The Purpose of God." A. St. John Chambre, in "The Latest Word of Universalism." George H. Emerson, in the "Columbian Congress." M. J. Savage, "The Worth of the Bible To-day." George T. Ladd, "What Is the Bible?" Vedder's "Socialism and the Ethics of Jesus." Rauschenbusch's "Christianizing the Social Order."

# XI. THE SPREAD OF THE FAITH

## THE AMELIORATION OF THEOLOGY

The Universalist Church has played a most important part in the great movement which for more than a hundred years has aimed at the reform of religion and the downfall of the stern and harsh theology which ruled American life. A hundred years ago men dwelt in theological darkness and religious gloom. Their God was a stern and vengeful task-master. Jesus was a peacemaker, trying to soften the wrath of an angered monarch. Human nature was utterly depraved. Life was a rigorous task required as a test of fitness for life to come. Salvation was an insurance against eternal hell. Parents mourned for their little babes in hell. Men did not dare to mourn with any hope for their other unregenerate dead. It was a veritable wintertime of the spirit.

Nobody finds anything to-day in the theological spirit which at all corresponds to such conceptions. The whole atmosphere has changed. To-day the theology of the average man holds that God is a loving Father who has placed man in this world to learn how to live, to find himself and his God, to subdue his own lower self and to dwell in peace and good-will with his brother. Jesus

is the revelation, in human life and in terms of humanity, of the nature of God and His disposition toward His creatures. We have sprung from lower forms of the divine creative power, and we are bound for higher estates. The future is bright with hope, and the destiny of man is to salvation.

Three great forces have combined, under God, to produce this marvelous and happy change. The first has been the growth of the spirit of democracy. Men have grown up to a higher conception of the capacity, the possibility, the destiny, of the political man, the citizen, and the new atmosphere thus created has stifled the old theology. The second force has been the growth of the scientific spirit, which forced so many of the old falsehoods about life and the soul to confess themselves, and has compelled a recasting of all the thought of intelligent men. The third has been a re-reading of the Bible, and the discovery of its real teaching, when freed from the misconceptions of bigots and speculators in ideas.

With these great allies, the Universalist and the Unitarian have wrought and fought along parallel lines, to establish a sounder theology and a kindlier life. The new theology is a triumph of faith, hope and love. Faith, that God and the universe are for us and not against us, that the creation is our

home, a safe highway, policed by angels and not by devils. Hope, that the end will be triumph, peace and joy. Love, expanding to the whole human family and finding itself in God at last.

## THE THEORY OF PUNISHMENT

The old theology exalted the idea of law, existing for its own sake and crushing the individual into compliance, or else casting him forever into hell. By necessary consequence it exaggerated greatly the fact of penalty, giving it enormous consequence, and setting it up as a sacred and awful idol. It taught that all things were planned to give every man his deserts. It insisted on a compliance to the law which it in the next breath declared man was incapable of rendering, and then sent him to an everlasting hell for his inability. By its teaching, man was made to magnify the law, not the law to magnify man.

The Larger Faith has reversed this valuation entirely. According to its teaching experience, law, penalty, are all arranged to give man the best possible chance to live his life and do his work. It counts the soul of supreme importance and the law as one means of bringing it into harmony with God. To realize its destiny is the one aim of the universe itself. God's plan is not to winnow a few choice souls for a select heaven, but

to fit every soul for the enjoyment of its birthright as a child of the Eternal Father. The final aim of punishment is not, therefore, the glory of God and the exhibition of His power, but the saving of souls. It is part of a vast scheme to educate and train man in righteousness. It is for the final good and blessing of the sinner and of the universe. The severity of God is the severity of love. Pain follows sin, not for vengeance' sake, but for mercy's sake.

The power of a higher theological ideal was never more clearly shown than in the revision of human conceptions of the functions of law and of penalty in society. To-day we insist that the object of the penalty is the reformation of the man who has incurred it. We try to consider, not merely the sinner's past, but also his future. We plan so that the same pains that come as retribution for his evil deeds, shall prepare him for better ones, and discipline him into the strength of a regulated manhood. Nor will the common judgment of men be persuaded that the divine method of penalty is less sane and beneficent than the procedure of mankind.

## THE CHANGE OF BASE IN MISSIONS

Thirty years ago, the Rev. Joseph Cook, then the redoubtable champion of New England Orthodoxy, was proclaiming that

the doctrines of Universalism, if preached and accepted, would cut the nerve of missionary effort. The implication of this sounding phrase was clear. In the mind of the author there was and there could be no adequate motive for carrying the gospel to those who never had heard it save the fact that without it, and without the conversion that it calls for, the heathen must undoubtedly perish everlastingly. The assumption was that no man would have any reason for going to men and women in darkness and ignorance except to save them from eternal hell. That Christians could be moved by pity for those less favored with religious light than themselves; that they could be impelled to convey the good tidings for sheer love of their fellows; that they could be driven by an irresistible hunger for souls; that they could be discontented with their own advantages as long as others were not sharing them; that they should feel no impulse from the expanding sense of brotherhood sweeping through the world—these considerations seem never to have occurred to these champions of a dying dogma. Yet this is the new ground to which the missionary work has been transferred in the last quarter-century. The vast enterprise, never so engaging and so enthusiastically pursued as to-day, is followed as a toil of brotherly love; as a

task set by the Saviour of men; as a part of the task of saving the whole of society from the drag and the infection of the slums of the world; as our contribution to the mighty task of the Heavenly Father, "who will have all men to be saved and to come unto a knowledge of the truth." Nor could there be any more complete refutation of the absurd prophecy of the Boston prophet, than the fact that among Universalists themselves the spirit of missionary enterprise has been growing with great rapidity, and the believers in the salvation of all men realize and teach that if their faith is to be efficient, they and all who believe in and pray for its truth, must take hold of the Lord's work and help in its fulfilment. There is nothing but helpfulness to the missionary cause in the stirring call of the Larger Faith.

## THE NATURE OF SALVATION

With the broadening of the conception of the nature of penalty and the scope of missions, has come also a total revision of the nature of salvation. That term once stood for the rescue of lost souls from an endless hell, an incomplete and unsuccessful effort of God to save something from the wreck of an ill-planned moral universe. The larger minds of to-day think of it as describing a vastly broader, grander thing. It means the

deliverance of the individual and the race from sin and from its consequences. It is God's provision for the man or the race that has lost its way. The old Hebrew meaning of sin is "missing the mark." And the tenor of scripture, the life of Israel, the voice of prophecy, the promise of the gospel, establish and strengthen the faith that mankind is to find its way, at last, and hit the mark. All our life is a groping for the way. All our suffering is the thwarting of the soul in its effort. All joy and peace are the attainment of redemption. God from the beginning has been guiding man into the true way. His love is always recalling him from his errors. Already he has raised up one soul that has found the way and has lived as God might live, were God a finite soul. "The supreme path to God is the humanity of Jesus." There is only one way to salvation, the way of love to God and man. There is only one truth which assures that salvation, the fatherhood of God. There is only one life which realizes it, the vital energy that came into the world through Jesus Christ. To know, to follow and to love him, is deliverance that is freedom, that is redemption. That is the portion of every creature, from which he shall not be kept. For we are all to be freed from our sins, our evil natures, our pangs of remorse, our deep despair. We are to love our duty

and find the deepest delight in our tasks. Through infinite discord and trial we are preparing for an existence of harmony and exaltation. Like a vast orchestra before it starts to play the symphony of some great master, we are getting our instruments in tune, and learning the wonderful score. That is no easy process, and it afflicts the ears of the sensitive. But when at last it is over and the musicians are ready, then the music of the sons of men, set free and glorified, will be more marvelous than the music of the spheres.

*References:* Hanson's "The Leaven at Work." Selleck's "The Spiritual Outlook." Munger's "Freedom of the Faith." Capen's "Punishment Disciplinary." "Our Word and Work for Missions." Charles Cuthbert Hall's "Christ and the Human Race." Gordon's "God All in All." (From his volume, "Through Man to God.") Adams's "The Leisure of God."

## XII. THE KINGDOM OF GOD

### THE NEW ATMOSPHERE

The influence of this Larger Faith and of the men and women who have loyally defended it and pressed it on the world's consciousness has been marked and amazing. It has produced a wholly new atmosphere, which has taken all the vitality out of the old theology. Like the milder airs which warm the ice-bound north when the sun returns in the spring, this revival of the early gospel dissolved the harsh bonds of the elder creeds. It has warmed the seeds of a higher conception of the universe and of the Power which sustains and unfolds it. As yet it has effected but small change in the forms of theology. The old creeds and confessions and articles still stand. But they have no longer the life and stamina they once possessed. Like the older forms of animal and vegetable life, they are not fitted to the new environment, and they are slowly dying. For while the forms of religion are stubborn and tenacious, its spirit may change, and has changed, to conform to the growing ideals and aspirations of the world. The heart of Christendom has outgrown its creed, and its practise has outrun its dogmas. The old creed presented God as an Infinite Tribute-taker, whose challenge to His children was, "Pay or die;"

the new spirit presents Him as the Father and Shepherd of souls, eternally guiding them toward life and obedience. The old creed declared that all souls exist for the glory of God; the new spirit proclaims a God who exists for the good of all souls. The old creed set forth a Lawgiver in the heavens intent on giving every man his deserts; the new spirit trusts in a Friend and Advocate pledged to fit every soul for all that it can enjoy and be. The old creed taught that man is utterly corrupt and incapable of any good; the new spirit sees in every soul a germ of the divine, developing and not decadent. If we add to these definite changes in the theological convictions of men, the tremendous sense of brotherhood which has entered into the social consciousness, the belief in the ascent of the universe in an eternal évolution, the increasing faith that the goal of the creation is the victory and the reign of good, we have the elements which combine to make a new spiritual atmosphere, in which the older dogmas can no more abide than the germs of physical disease can hold their own against the pure air and light.

## HERE AND HEREAFTER

The Larger Faith embraces and emphasizes that law of continuity which, science has taught us, runs through all the unfold-

ing life of creation. The present is rooted in the past, the future in the present. Time is only a section of eternity, with endless duration before it and after it. We are living in eternity as truly as we ever shall be. Here and hereafter are part of the same web of duration, evermore woven on "the roaring looms of time." It follows from this truth, that life here, the life of the individual soul, has its relations in two directions,—backward as an effect of what has been, forward as a cause of what is to be. Hence the life of the soul is one life, here and hereafter. Its experiences in this life, the life that goes on in this body, are therefore the beginnings of the life which succeeds our mortality. It is the first step in an eternal march. It is the primary grade in an eternal spiritual education. It is the soil in which the soul roots itself for an eternal growth.

It follows, again, from this view of life here and hereafter, that, in a real and profound sense, this life is a probation, an apprenticeship, a fitting school for whatever lies beyond. To-day is always a factor in the determination of to-morrow, and fitness is an invariable condition of promotion. Here and hereafter we shall be advanced in knowledge and in happiness only as we are qualified and proven. Fitness for the blessedness of heaven depends on our faithfulness

and our moral efficiency. So far as every stage of life is a preparation for the next and for all succeeding stages, so far this present life upon the earth and in the body determines the plane upon which we shall enter the next. But that does not mean that we are to consider this life as determining the final destiny of the soul. It is not a period of suspended judgment, whose purpose is to test the qualities of the spirit, before it is judged worthy to be consigned to heaven or to hell. It is not possible that a loving Father would rest the fate of a moral being, for all the ages of eternity, on the impulsive and unenlightened decisions of a will and a judgment only in their infancy. Opportunity is the eternal gift of God to His striving children. Behind the closed door which shuts the soul off from all further chance in this life, stands the same Father who helped us in the earth-life, ready to renew His help in the changed conditions of the disembodied life.

## THE TRIUMPH OF GOOD

The Larger Faith wholly repudiates the common conception of the victory of God, —a victory which the Orthodox creeds all concede, but which, as they describe it, can not be distinguished from defeat. Sin is disobedience to God and rebellion against

His name and love. It is not therefore destroyed until sinners obey and rebels turn loyal. To shut them up in a place; to circumscribe their powers for harm; to cut them off from other creatures; to house them in hell forever—this is not to succeed in establishing the purposes of God. It is not to build a successful creation. Such an ending means failure, flat and final.

It is not to such a conclusion, such a shallow triumph, that the Universalist believer looks forward. He reads in the spiritual skies the omens of a future in which the purpose of God shall be realized and the evil of the moral creation be overcome with good. The Lord of Lords and King of Kings will triumph, not in the overthrow, but in the reconciliation of His enemies. He will not leave the power He has been battling to breathe defiance and treason forever. He will not let everlasting disobedience defy His might and love. When God triumphs He will sweep the field. He will subjugate, not surround. He will bring under, not to bay; that is, He will reduce and reconcile the estrangement of the evil-hearted. His hatred of sin will destroy sin. His love will truly triumph only when it is met by man's answering love, only when the cry comes up from the nethermost hell, the cry for which creation waits and listens with longings

unspeakable, the cry foretold in the story of the prodigal son, and destined to come at last from the heart of the most reprobate and obstinate rebel, "I will arise and go to my Father." This will be the true, the final, triumph of good over evil. It will mean the completed harmony of all souls with God.

## THE GOOD TIME COMING

With the advent of the Larger Faith has come also to the hearts of Christian men, the understanding of the great plan and enterprise of Jesus Christ in the world. It was to establish the Kingdom of God. It was to organize all souls and all moral forces into a society whose will should be the will of God. This was the chief theme of his talk to men,—parable, precept, preaching, prayer. The central doctrine of the Son of God is that this world and all worlds where sentient beings dwell are at last to come into harmony with the will of God; that men are to form a great fellowship, whose law is love and whose ideals are freedom, truth, righteousness and peace. This kingdom is to be spread and established by the power of the Divine Spirit in Jesus the Christ. Its work and sway begin in the individual heart, and require the personal allegiance of the individual to the great Head of the Kingdom. This dominion extends to the control of

institutions, laws, policies and all the organized life of society. It is established on the earth, but its course and growth are not limited to this world; they reach forward into the unseen and the eternal; begun here, it will culminate in the hereafter. But its program doubtless includes a regenerated earth, a society purged of evil and selfishness, the brotherhood of man made real and permanent, the nations of the earth federated in peace and good will.

For the accomplishment of this sublime and blessed end, reliance is had upon the efficiency of two great principles, or spiritual forces, the power of personality on the one hand, and on the other the propagating power of truth and love. The personality of Jesus Christ and the contagiousness of the right —these are the great and all-conquering factors in the coming of the kingdom. These vast and as yet almost untried forces will at length overcome all that delays and opposes them and subdue the hearts of the most obdurate, and "all shall know Him, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord."

## GOD ALL IN ALL

In the emphasis which it has placed on the destiny of mankind and the final outcome of the creation, Universalism has not

only conformed to a necessity of the great debate with the traditional creeds, but has expressed one of the great fundamentals of the Faith. The question of destiny is not, as some would have us think, a mere incidental inquiry, of no practical concern or moment. It is, on the other hand, of vital concern in the shaping of man's conscience and his conduct, whether he expects his enterprises, the moral ambitions next his heart, to succeed, or whether he must look forward to failure and to heart-break. It is of the greatest import, too, whether he can worship a God who has entire control of the moral situation, or one who must look helplessly on while His universe goes down in utter moral wreck. Therefore the supreme thought of all theology must always be man's destiny and his final relations to his Heavenly Father. Therefore the prayer of human nature will ever be, in Whittier's words:

> "Wilt Thou not make, Eternal Source and Goal,
> In Thy long years, life's broken circle whole,
> And turn to praise the cry of a lost soul."

As a motive to toil, therefore, and as an inspiration to worship, the idea of man's return to his God and Creator is one of the most thrilling in all the realm of thought. The largest faith can grasp at nothing broader, the highest hope can soar no higher

than the splendid prophecy of Paul concerning the final consummation of God's purposes in His moral world, "Then shall the Son also himself be subjected to him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all." There is no more glorious thought in all man's dreams of good and of blessing than that of the return of the soul, after all its wanderings and its tragedies, enlightened, chastened, endued with the strength of self-conquest and of heavenly love, to the Father's house, and the complete reunion of Creator and creature. To such a consummation the Larger Faith bids us look in hope and joy without measure.

*References:* Selleck's "The Spiritual Outlook." Fiske's "The Destiny of Man." Gordon's "Through Man to God." Newman Smyth's "Old Faiths in New Light." C. C. Hall, "Christ and the Human Race." J. C. Adams, "This Life and the Next," in "The Latest Word of Universalism." Dr. Orello Cone's "Salvation" ("Manuals of Faith and Duty"). E. G. Brooks on "Salvation," in "Our New Departure." Hosea Ballou, "Treatise on Atonement" ("Conclusion"—one of the most eloquent and thrilling passages in literature). Adams, "Universalist Columbian Congress," "Universal Holiness and Happiness." Allin's "Universalism Asserted." F. Herbert Stead, "The Kingdom of God." George D. Boardman, "The Kingdom." A. B. Bruce, "The Kingdom of God." Henry N. Dodge's "Christus Victor." Edwin Arnold's "Light of the World."

# XIII. STATEMENTS OF THE FAITH

## THE PHILADELPHIA ARTICLES

The Universalist body has always been ready and willing to subscribe to a creed—in other words, to state the things it stood for and then to stand for the things it stated. It has never been afraid to say what it believed to-day for fear it might believe otherwise to-morrow. It has regarded its creed, or statement of faith, as a milepost to mark how far its thought has gone; and it has never been afraid that the milepost would be turned into a hitching-post, to arrest all further thinking. The history of the church has shown that its practise justifies its theory. For in its century and a quarter of experience, it has twice remodeled its statement of belief and adapted it to the new times and the advance in thought and in conviction developed by the years.

The first statement of belief was adopted at Philadelphia, by the convention held there in May, 1790. Its authorship is unknown, but it probably had the approval and possibly was the composition of Dr. Benjamin Rush. It is as follows:

*Sec.* 1. *Of the Holy Scriptures.* We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testa-

ments to contain a revelation of the perfections and will of God and the rule of faith and practise.

*Sec.* 2. *Of the Supreme Being.* We believe in One God, infinite in all His perfections, and that these perfections are all modifications of infinite, adorable, incomprehensible and unchangeable Love.

*Sec.* 3. *Of the Mediator.* We believe that there is one Mediator between men and God, the man Christ Jesus, in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; who by giving himself a ransom for all hath redeemed them to God by his blood; and who, by the merits of his death and the efficacy of his spirit, will finally restore the whole human race to happiness.

*Sec.* 4. *Of the Holy Ghost.* We believe in the Holy Ghost, whose office it is to make known to sinners the truth of their salvation through the medium of the Holy Scriptures, and to reconcile the hearts of men to God, and thereby dispose them to genuine holiness.

*Sec.* 5. *Of Good Works.* We believe in the obligation of the moral law as the rule of life; and we hold that the love of God, manifest to man in a redeemer, is the best means of producing obedience to that law and promoting a holy, active and useful life.

## THE WINCHESTER PROFESSION

For thirteen years the foregoing Articles were accepted as the official statement of the things on which the Universalists of the country were agreed. In 1803, at a convention in New Hampshire in the old town of Winchester, a new creed was presented, drafted by a member of a committee appointed a year before. It is in the handwriting of Walter Ferris, who is credited with being the author of the revised creed, as it really was, for the form and spirit of the Philadelphia statement are well and definitely preserved in the new document. The revision and amendment of the former creed are in the interests of clearness, brevity, rhythm of diction, and liturgical form. The following is the Winchester Profession:

Article I. We believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments contain a revelation of the character of God and of the duty, interest and final destination of mankind.

Article II. We believe that there is one God, whose nature is Love, revealed in one Lord Jesus Christ, by one Holy Spirit of Grace, who will finally restore the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness.

Article III. We believe that holiness and true happiness are inseparably connected, and that believers ought to be careful to

maintain order and practise good works; for these things are good and profitable unto men.

In 1870, on the occasion of the reorganization of the Convention at Gloucester, the Winchester Profession was made part of the constitutional law of the church, and enacted as a condition of fellowship. Since that date the Profession has been the accredited symbol of the church's faith and its unity of heart. A long discussion arose some ten years later, concerning the propriety of the word "restore." A strong and aggressive party in the church insisted that as man had never been "holy" in any vital sense, it could not be properly said that his attainment of righteousness and peace would be a restoration. It would more truly be a promotion. The debate lasted for twenty years, and ended in the withdrawal of the mandatory clause regarding fellowship, and the offering of an alternative statement of principles, assent to which is the condition of fellowship. This happy solution of the difficulty was the suggestion of Dr. George T. Knight of Tufts College.

## THE FIVE PRINCIPLES

The most important and admirable feature of the Five Principles adopted at Chicago and reaffirmed at Boston, is the provision

that anybody is at liberty to state the creed in his own words, provided that those words express the same principles. For example, many brethren object to the word "retribution" as a word implying revenge or unworthy anger on the part of Deity. Such members have a right to substitute such a word as "penalty" or "punishment" or "recompense," which stands for the same general thought, without penalty or offense against the law and its requirements. The following are the Five Principles of Universalism:

### UNIVERSALIST PROFESSION OF BELIEF AND CONDITIONS OF FELLOWSHIP

1. The Profession of Belief adopted at the session at Winchester, N. H., A. D. 1803, is as follows:

Article I. We believe that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments contain a revelation of the character of God and of the duty, interest and final destination of mankind.

Article II. We believe that there is one God, whose nature is Love, revealed in one Lord Jesus Christ, by one Holy Spirit of Grace, who will finally restore the whole family of mankind to holiness and happiness.

Article III. We believe that holiness and true happiness are inseparably connected,

and that believers ought to be careful to maintain order and practise good works; for these things are good and profitable unto men.

II. The conditions of fellowship shall be as follows:

1. The acceptance of the essential principles of the Universalist Faith, to wit: 1. The Universal Fatherhood of God; 2. The Spiritual authority and leadership of His Son, Jesus Christ; 3. The trustworthiness of the Bible as containing a revelation from God; 4. The certainty of just retribution for sin; 5. The final harmony of all souls with God.

The Winchester Profession is commended as containing these principles, but neither this nor any other precise form of words is required as a condition to fellowship, provided always that the principles above stated be professed.

2. The acknowledgment of the authority of the General Convention and assent to its law.

### 4. OTHER AND PRIVATE CREEDS

Several admirable statements of the faith have been framed by individuals, which, while bearing no authoritative force, are nevertheless confessedly adequate and representative, and which somewhat better serve

liturgical uses. One of the best of these was issued in 1867 by the Rhode Island State Convention. It follows the question, "What is Universalism?"

"It is a belief in one God the Creator of all things, and in Jesus Christ His Son, who is the true Teacher, Example and Saviour of men; in the Holy Spirit, the Comforter; in the certainty of retribution; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of all men from the dead; and their final holiness and happiness in the immortal life."

This statement has been modified and expanded somewhat, and is offered in "Gloria Patri, Revised" as alternative to the authorized statement of the Five Principles. It is as follows:

"I believe in God the Father, Almighty and Universal; and in Jesus Christ, His Son, the true Teacher, Example, and Saviour of the world. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the quickener and comforter of men. I believe in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as a revelation of righteousness and love. I believe in the holy church universal; in the communion of saints; in the certainty of punishment for transgression; in the forgiveness of sins; in the life immortal; in the triumph of goodness and mercy; and in the union and harmony at last of all souls with God."

The Sunday school of the Church of the Redeemer in Hartford has a form of the Five Principles, slightly modified, which moves more easily in the rhythm of the ritual:

"We believe in the Fatherhood of God; the authority of Jesus Christ; the teachings of the Bible; the punishment of sins; the final harmony of all souls with God."

Still another private statement of the faith may be cited, because of its brevity and its statement in the language of the Bible:

1. *Concerning the Name of the Creator.* "God is Love."

2. *Concerning the Duty of the Creature.* "Love is the fulfilling of the law."

3. *Concerning the End of the Creation.* "Love never faileth."

*References:* Eddy's "History of Universalism in America." Fisher's "Short History." "Centennial of the Profession of Faith." Eddy's "History of Universalism."

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